A SHORT HISTORY

OF

INDIAN LITERATURE

By

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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LONDON

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1907

TO

THE REV. J. P. MAHAFFY, D.D.,

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THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED IN
SINCERE ADMIRATION FOR HIS WIDE CULTURE
AND BROAD SYMPATHIES

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INTRODUCTION

We may be allowed to congratulate ourselves that we live at a time when the long-drawn conflict of man to win a mastery over Nature seems to be on the turning-point towards victory. The time may, in a sense, be still called the age of steam, though it is passing into the age of the forces that will conquer steam. But the crash of machinery, even the clang of the tram-car or the whiz of the on-coming motor, need not deaden our perception of other sounds, that make perhaps less noise in the world, but are none the less a token of the presence of forces more potent and more enduring than even the conquerors of steam.

In silence, unnoticed by the daily press, a revolution is being brought about; has been, indeed, so far accomplished that its

final victory is quite assured. The literatures of the East have been discovered; are being edited, elucidated, translated, understood. The Western mind is very naturally disposed, at first sight, to think this a matter of small importance. What can be the real value of literatures that have contributed little or nothing to the mental equipment of the races that rule the world with so much practical success? The argument, in spite of its obvious fallacies, is often deemed conclusive. But it is not necessary to discuss it. Arguments cannot change accomplished facts. Besides which, simultaneously with the discovery of the documents, and in great measure as a result of that discovery, there has arisen a new method both of using and of estimating ancient writings—a method that has changed the whole aspect of the question.

That method is the comparative study of historical data; the method of looking at a literature, not at all with the object of finding in it the absolute truth, or of picking out in it telling phrases and poetical

subtleties, but of finding out, by a comparison of the course of human thought in different ages and in different countries, the sequence of ideas which has developed from the earliest beginnings of thought into what we are apt to call the civilisation of to-day.

It is not too much to say that this new method applied not only to the data already known, but also to the new discoveries in Egypt and Mesopotamia, in India, China, and Japan, is fast tending to revolutionise our ideas of history. When we were boys, history meant the study of a century or two of Greece and Rome, oblivious of the centuries that lay behind. Then with a jump we came to the Reformation and the French Revolution; and an epitome of the battles and politics of our native country was held to complete the picture. These disjointed fragments of the history of Greece and Rome were called "ancient history." And in ancient and in modern history alike, the stress was laid upon romantic incidents and personal adventures, upon fights and dynastic intrigues, rather than upon the

evolution of social institutions and the growth of human ideas. There was no trace of what, for want of a better word, we must call *weltgeschichte.* Each event recorded was regarded as isolated, unconnected, either as cause or as effect, with what followed or with what had gone before.

In the new method all this has been changed. The personal details, the stories of battles, the perfidies of courts, have faded into insignificance. To the eye of the scholar, who is learning year by year to have a clearer vision of the great panorama of the history of mankind, the matters that loom largest are the social institutions, the religious beliefs, the scientific attainments, and the philosophical ideas, which continue steady in their growth and influence, while dynasties rise and fall.

Documents, studied so long from the purely linguistic, or literary, or artistic points of view, are eagerly searched afresh for the evidence, so long neglected, that they throw upon these newer problems. Each new document, as it comes to light, and yields

up its secrets to the patient explorers in the newer fields, is judged, not only from the literary, but chiefly from the historical, standpoint, by the new evidence it affords to confirm, to modify, or to throw light upon that of other older documents already known. Each new fact is regarded no longer as an isolated occurrence. It is compared with evidence as to similar facts noticed elsewhere under similar conditions; it is considered in its relations as cause and effect; it is fitted into the general scheme, as a lost and rediscovered piece fits into an imperfect puzzle.

In this way it gains a new importance. Few, for instance, of the old Vedic poets, may show what would now be called literary skill. But the interpretation of their uncouth hymns, imperfect though it still remains, has shed a flood of light upon the methods of the beginnings of philosophy, and upon the evolution, in an important stage, of religious conceptions throughout the world. The law-books of the Brahmins have no literary beauty, and are conspicuously devoid of

historical sense, they are full of bigotry and class-prejudice, and teem with misstatements and omissions in support of the special privileges claimed for their authors; and they tell us nothing about what laws men should enact or carry out. But they throw the most valuable light on the growth of institutions; and they have given us a solid basis for our investigations into the history of law.

Such instances might easily be multiplied. And of all the newly-acquired documents, those belonging to the literature of India have proved themselves, in this respect, of the highest value. It is to them we owe the new sciences of Comparative Philology and Comparative Mythology; and they bid fair to give us some of the most important results which historical research has yet gathered for the rising science of Comparative Religion.

The reason of this is not far to seek. The Indian intellect is remarkably keen. In philosophy and religion it achieved, very early, results of great importance and value,

and its first attempts at the investigation of medicine, astronomy, philology, geometry, and law, were all of a high degree of excellence. Shut in by the impassable barrier of its giant mountains, India was able, for many centuries, to pursue in peace a line of natural development. From the time of the establishment of the kingdom of Kosala in the eighth century, B.C., down to the break up of the great Buddhist Empire at the end of the third century, B.C., the internal wars were few and far between. That was the time of the golden age of intellectual life in India. And when the Tartar and Scythian hordes came in afterwards to ravage the highly-cultured districts of the North-West, we have a whole series of events that resemble, in the most suggestive manner, the invasion by the Goths and Vandals of the highly-cultured Roman Empire.

In each case, the vigorous but unlettered conquerors were intellectually conquered by their more cultured, if less warlike, foes. In each case, the invading hordes adopted

the faith and the fashions of the more developed civilisation. And in each case, as a result, the level of intelligence was, temporarily at least, so reduced, that the standard of culture was entirely changed. Room had to be made for the more primitive ideas, the animistic views of the newcomers. As time went on, the old and new amalgamated. A number of kingdoms took the place of the old empire. New languages or dialects, understood in limited areas, became the living speech of the people. And what learning survived or grew up afresh, was expressed in a dead language, the language of the Church—Latin in Europe, Sanskrit in India—the literary form of what had been a living language centuries before.

In both cases this new mediæval literature, the expression of the new culture, was based upon the old. But it was the old transformed, weakened, overlaid by superstitions of all kinds that appealed to the taste of the new environment. Religion and philosophy, law and medicine, astrology

and alchemy, tales and lyrics formed the main subject of these works. But there was little or no originality. It was a long age of commentators and interpreters (in India of the retelling of twice-told tales, recasting and rearranging, in the interests of the ever-varying beliefs, of old material). In India, in the sixth and seventh centuries, A.D., there was much greater literary skill, especially in epic poetry and the drama, than there was, at the same period, in Europe. Later on the skill almost killed the ability; and with the greatest ingenuity authors put together the wretched rubbish of the artificial poetry. But in the time of its glory the mediæval literature of India reached a level of excellence never elsewhere attained when a dead language was the medium of expression.

During the whole of this long period—from Vedic times down to the Moslem invasions—we have a continuous series of documents. There are gaps—whole literatures have been lost. But some of the gaps are still being filled up as new discoveries

are made, and new texts are edited. Even as they stand these documents give us sufficient evidence to enable us to trace, at least in outline, the developments (or rather changes, for they are sometimes degradations) of thought in India. Nowhere else is the chain of evidence so long and so complete. And it runs on lines parallel to those followed also, under somewhat similar conditions, in the West. We cannot be satisfied with our study of the evolution of institutions and ideas among the Aryan nations of Europe until we have drawn the assistance it is possible to draw from the similar evolution that took place among the Aryans in India.

It is true, no doubt, that there is not now — there probably never has been — a pure Aryan race. But the authors of the Indian writings are just as much, or just as little, Aryan as the European writers whose culture is the basis of our own. The Indians were rightly proud of their descent. The Buddha called his way the Aryan path. And however distant may be the relation-

ship in blood, we are studying, when we study the ancient literature of India, the work of men who were intellectually akin to ourselves.

Such are some of the reasons which constitute the unique importance and value, for the historian and the philosopher, of Indian Literature. Some of the most influential leaders of Western thought, both in Europe and America, have considered that Indian thinkers, with a speculative vigour and originality following a natural line of development in isolation from the rest of the world, have succeeded in their views of life in grasping and emphasising certain phases of truth, religious and philosophical, that have been slurred over or not noticed at all in the West. If we consider all the circumstances we shall probably be forced to the conclusion that that is probably so, that it would be strange indeed if it were not. Our reasonable antipathy to the vagaries of inconsistent nonsense, to the superficial inanities often put forward by certain popular Western writers as Eastern thought, need not prevent

us from giving serious attention to what the Indian writers themselves, and especially in their best periods, have said.

Now there are not a few who, either from a laudable curiosity or from one or other of the reasons above suggested, desire to look into these things. The original documents are a closed book to them. Unabridged translations are not only too long, but are at times well-nigh as dark as the originals, and, in spite of the English used, require almost a special education to use them aright. The histories of Indian Literature written for scholars are so largely occupied with discussions of the difficult and obscure questions of date and authorship that they do not adequately provide for this reasonable desire of the average general reader. What is wanted is a selection of suitable passages made with this special aim in view; made both with sympathy and with historical insight and sense of value; and accompanied with just the short amount of explanation that is necessary for the purpose sought.

The following pages seem to me to satisfy

very admirably on the whole these requirements. No two scholars would choose exactly the same texts. Personally, I should have included more from the golden age of the Upanishads and the Nikâyas. But it is not so easy to say what could have been omitted to make room for this new matter. There is nothing in the volume that is not useful. And with these few words of preface I have the honour of introducing this book to the general reader with the conviction that it fills a gap that wanted filling, and in the hope that it will meet with the success it certainly deserves.

T. W. RHYS DAVIDS.

PREFACE

THERE is no want of excellent manuals on Indian Literature, but, as a rule, they are not elementary enough to appeal to the popular taste. The following pages address themselves to the general reader who knows nothing or little of Eastern thought. The subject is far too much ignored outside the ranks of Oriental scholars. And yet, no educated Englishman who feels the responsibility of Empire, and wants to think imperially, can afford to disregard the voice of India any longer. Her ancient ideals throw a flood of light on the present needs of her teeming millions. But the intellectual achievements of the Hindus well deserve to be studied on their own merits. The casket of Sanskrit literature is old-fashioned, but precious, and of exquisite workmanship, like

handsome old family plate. The Sanskrit language has, at all times, been the recognised medium of the Indian mind, and numbers of poems and philosophical treatises are still composed in that venerable tongue. The royal psalms of Israel are no more sublime than the sacred poetry of Hindustan, and the battle music of the Mahâ-Bhârata is as stirring as the heroic lays of Greece. Even a slight acquaintance with the lofty tenets of the Vedânta teachers will amply repay the student, since the mission of Vedânta seems to be twofold in the West —first to spiritualise the narrow materialism into which Physical Science, despite the marvellous discoveries of this busy age of research, has allowed itself to drift, and secondly, to rationalise religious thought, even as the revival of Greek learning, four hundred years ago, was destined to breathe new life into the dead bones of mediæval theology.

This little book is complete in itself, and the text can be easily understood even without consulting the footnotes. Most of

them as well as the last chapter are meant for readers who are interested in the kinship of tongues and migration of words, but have neither the leisure nor inclination to plunge into learned discussions on philology and questions of race.

A second part which is in preparation will deal with the Hindu Theatre. The plays of Kâlidâsa and Bhavabhûti, though surpassed by Shakespeare in humour and dramatic force, have a brilliancy and glow of passion by no means inferior to stars of such magnitude as Calderon and Schiller.

NOTES ON PRONUNCIATION

Sanskrit.		English.	Example.
a	=	m*a*mma	mantra
â	=	m*a*rket	râja
i	=	f*i*t	shiva
final i	=	an*y*	swâmi
î	=	f*ee*t	sîta
u	=	p*u*ll	buddha
final u	=	cuck*oo*	manu
û	=	p*oo*l	sûtra
e	=	d*ay*	veda
ai	=	d*ie*	shaiva
o	=	n*o*	gotama
au	=	n*ow*	gautama
g	=	*g*ale	gîta
th	=	swee*th*eart	vânaprastha
y	=	*y*et	himâlaya

In order to simplify the spelling, all accents have been omitted over the final â and î. Thus, Sîtâ and Kâlî are spelt Sîta and Kâli.[1] Nor have accents been provided for words sufficiently known in Europe, *e.g.*, Âryan and Brâhmin, Râjput and Kashmîr. Sikh, likewise derived from the Sanskrit, sounds like *seek*. An English pronunciation should be given to Punjab and Ganges, also to Anglicised terms such as pundit (scholar) and suttee (burning of widows).

There is a slight difference of sound between *sh* in the word nut*sh*ell, and *ch* in kit*ch*en. The latter is pitched a key higher, being uttered from the palate or roof of the mouth, while *sh* is formed in the hollowed tongue. Both sounds are represented in the Sanskrit alphabet, but since Ka*sh*mir, notwithstanding the palatal sibilant in the Indian script, is the accepted orthography in England, we have used *sh* in transcribing either sound. The reader will, therefore,

[1] Latin, too, sacrifices, for the sake of brevity, the vowel length shown in the final â and î of Indian feminines. Nov*a* (new) is equal to Sanskrit nav*á*, and de*a* (goddess) to dev*í*.

find *Sh*iva by the side of Vi*sh*nu, although the god of the Shivaists really bears a palatal initial, and the name of the rival deity an ordinary *sh*.

D, *n*, and *t* are linguals or tongue sounds in English, but dentals in Italian. The countrymen of *Dant*e pronounce the poet's name by pressing the tip of their tongue against the teeth. Sanskrit has two letters for each of the three consonants, but the phonetic distinction is hardly noticeable to an Englishman, and has grammatical rather than literary value. For this reason, we transliterate Indian linguals (Vish*n*u) and dentals (Ma*n*u) alike.

A SHORT HISTORY OF INDIAN LITERATURE.

I

THE ARYAN MIGRATION

Several thousand years ago, when the Caspian Waters still flowed in the same bed as the Black and Aral Seas, the Scythian flats and prairies which bordered on the north of that vast inland lake were inhabited by pastoral tribes of kindred blood and speech. At length, as the floods subsided, and the Caucasus emerged between the shrunken waters, and further east salt marshes and desert land appeared, the unsettled shepherd clans descended from the barren Kirghiz Steppe, and entered the fair valleys of the Oxus and Jaxartes. They called each other âryas or friends. But the

broad pastures could not bear them all, for their flocks were considerable, and strife and bloodshed broke out among the unruly herdsmen. The unhappy division was the cause of further wanderings. Conjointly or separately the large families trekked on with their cattle, tents, and ox-carts; the dusky uplands of the Pamirs and the snow-clad summits of the Hindu Kush towering before them in the distance. The track of the emigrants imperceptibly led them into tangled woodland. With rude stone axes they cleared the primeval forest, and with crooked branches torn off the aged trees they turned the virgin soil into arable land, thus changing from graziers and drovers to agriculturists. But for a long time tillage was looked upon as an ignoble labour fit only for domesticated slaves, and unworthy of a free-born rover. It was only gradually that the Âryas settled down as husbandmen, and that their name denoted a peasant aristocracy — proud rulers of native races. The Asiatic word leaped into still wider bounds since the re-discovery of Sanskrit, more than a hundred years ago. The principal languages of Europe are now known to be related to Sanskrit; they constitute, together with

their Eastern sister-tongues, the Aryan or Indo-European family of speech.[1]

The Aryan kinsfolk who had been left behind in Scythia moved westward, and were likewise compelled by new geographical conditions to become settlers on the land. As they approached the dense forests of Volhynia, and the Carpathian Mountains, they too learned how to sow the wild-growing corn, and cultivate the fertile ground which yielded sustenance to their kin and kine. The produce of the farm was replenished by fishing and hunting. The spirit of enterprise has ever been with the Aryan race. It drove the English over sea, and led to the foundation of the British Empire. It shed the lustre of Imperial Rome over the uttermost parts of the then known world. The same love of adventure impelled the dreaded Vikings to undertake their piratical voyages, and to roam and sack the rich lowlands along the Northern Sea. No less

[1] There is no linguistic connection between the Âryas and the arable land, despite the similarity of sound and the association of thoughts. The root *ar* in the sense of ploughing (*ar*are in Latin) is confined to the languages of Europe. Ârya never meant ploughman; the idea embedded in the Sanskrit word is that of friendship and loyalty to the clan.

did it animate the restless Asiatics of old, who broke up their pristine homesteads and set out in search of fresh settlements far away in the highlands of Iran and the plains of the Punjab. Neither documentary nor traditional record of that remote age has come down to us, and the pleasing picture of ancient Aryan life which has been drawn by scholars, though highly suggestive and not wanting in colour, is, of necessity, incomplete and conjectural, not unlike one of the noble torsos which are occasionally excavated amidst classical ruins, and touched up by the skill and fancy of the antiquarian.

The vast tribal commotion, at the very dawn of civilisation, will, in its details, for ever remain in darkness. The wanderings of those who first called themselves Âryas probably occupied many generations. There is no reason to assume a simultaneous exodus of the patriarchal settlers. It seems more likely that groups of them left the old country, one at a time, just as a family or clan might feel disposed to move on owing to over-population, famine, or plague, or, may be, to better land prospects held out in a happier clime. Literary evidence is not forthcoming until the period of the

Aryan migration is definitely closed. Even compositions as old as the Vedic hymns or Homeric poems reveal a much later state of society. When Sanskrit and Greek were spoken, the Aryan race was no longer one, but split up into many nations, each destined to take a leading part in the history of the world. The mild Hindu and mystic Persian, the beauty-loving Greek and practical Roman, the imaginative Celt and profound Teuton, have all left deep traces in the path of religion and poetry, law and science. Slav genius though yet asleep in its cradle is likewise maturing into future distinction and greatness. Every one of the Aryan off-shoots has sprung from the humble parent-stem in the Scythian wilds that has grown and expanded until fruitful branches overspread and sheltered nearly the whole of the territorial range which extends from England to India, and is swept by the snowdrifts of the Scandinavian moorlands and, at the same time, fanned by the fragrant breezes of the Mediterranean Sea.[1]

[1] After parting with their Indo-Iranian kinsmen, the Aryan main stock passed through a common period of agriculture, probably in the south-west of Russia. Hence the Teutonic tribes proceeded through Galicia and Poland, and entered the lowlands of Germany,

II

THE ÂRYAS IN THE PUNJAB

We cannot tell in what direction the first move of the Eastern Âryas was made. The fine grass-land of North-Western India probably attracted their early attention. They were by no means peaceably received by the Dasyus or natives of the Punjab. The Dasyu people appear to have fought bravely; but their long resistance was in vain. The vanquished Britons were chased before the pursuing Saxon into the fastnesses of Wales and Cornwall, where their national life grew feeble and, at last, faded away. Even so were the conquered Dasyus driven into the

whilst the classical and Celtic clans journeyed together along the Danube. Subsequently the Celts, left to themselves, occupied the Central Rhinelands. About B.C. 2000 or 1500, when bronze came to be used by the side of polished stone, the European Aryans were seated in their oldest historic settlements. Full particulars on the question of the Urheimat (original home) will be found in the Reallexikon der Indogermanischen Altertumskunde (Strasburg, 1901) by O. Schrader, the veteran leader in the field of Indo-European antiquities.

Dekhan swamps and jungles where, under various names, they still linger on in a rude state of political independence.

Those who submitted were made to serve on the Punjab estates of their new masters. The Hindus—a name that has been given to the Aryan population of India[1]—naturally held the aborigines in contempt. The Shûdras or lowest class in the later caste system are supposed to be the descendants of the ancient Dasyus.

III

THE VEDAS[2]

THE Dasyu War in the Punjab is the historical background of the Vedas, a miscellany of mantras, *i.e.*, psalms, hymns, and prayers. The orthodox Hindu looks upon the Vedas as shruti or revelation. They are held no

[1] In agreement with ancient usage. In England, however, it is customary to restrict the name to the modern Hindus.

[2] The Vedas are a large literature in themselves, and will be treated more fully in the next volume. Our present purpose is to interest, rather than instruct, the general reader in Vedic mythology which, even in India, is more revered than understood.

less sacred in India than the Bible is in Christian lands. The Vedas are believed to be the eternal breath of the Almighty—the divine voice heard by the rishis, the seers and prophets of old. The inspired rishis communicated the mantras to the Brahmins or priestly caste, by whom Vedic knowledge has been as jealously guarded from profane contact, as Holy Writ was withheld from vulgar sight by the mediæval church of Europe. The Vedic hymns are addressed to the powers which are seen at work in Nature, and on which agricultural prospects and personal temperament, even with us, depend so much. The roseate dawn (ushas) that seems to dispel the powers of darkness when her blushes spread over the cool morning sky, and the glitter of the star-bespangled heavens (varuna) so welcome after the heat and fatigue of a tropical day, almost invited to songs of praise and thanks-offering. The need of soft showers (indra), so that the swelling grain might ripen into a bounteous harvest, easily suggested prayer and oblation. And what could more fitly propitiate the angry flash of lightning (agni), and the crop-destroying maruts or hail-storms, than holy hymn and sacrifice?

After a time, the divine personality with which the powers of Nature had been invested was alone remembered, whilst the physical element passed into oblivion. The Vedas have prayers for corn and cattle, long life and offspring. In some passages, the god is invoked to prosper the Âryas, and smite their enemies. One mantra calls upon Varuna to pardon committed sin, another prays the sun-god to remove the tempter and evil-doer out of the way. There are hymns expressive of a yearning after righteousness, and of a child-like trust in life everlasting. Faith in a future life, indeed, pervades and sweetens Indian song. Greek bard and Roman poet have but rarely touched on the immortality of the soul, yet, a similar tendency of religious growth can be traced on classical ground.

The Homeric Greeks, too, worshipped the personifications of Nature. Zeus signifies the bright sky, the land-girding ocean became Poseidon, the celestial fire they named Hephaistos, and the all-nourishing earth was transformed into the goddess Demeter. The Hellenic husbandman of the heroic age, in offering prayer and first-fruit to Demeter, intended no more than to do homage to the benignant earth, to whose productive power

he had entrusted the hidden seed. But social conditions rapidly changed in Greece, and a town-bred Athenian, at the time of Sophocles or Plato, could hardly be expected to identify the great goddess with the tutelary guardian of the spade and plough. Divine worship in Demeter's temple meant, to him, trust in a kindly and beneficent deity. But the Indian mind dug deeper, and did not rest content until it had immortalised the human soul, and merged the fleeting hues of Nature and the host of gods and goddesses into one divine essence. The Vedas declare that God is one, though he be named Indra, Agni, Varuna.[1]

[1] The word *Veda* is derived from the Aryan root *vid*, which means (1) seeing, (2) seeing with the mind's eye. Veda is what we should call intuitive knowledge. The Hindus tried to express by Veda much the same as we do by *vision* (short for vid-sion) and *ideas* (short for vid-eas). They meant to convey that he, who is not blinded by the fumes of passion and desire, is the true seer and ideal sage.

English *wit* and *wis*dom have sprung from the same root *vid*; pro*vid*ing is "seeing" to things beforehand.

Idol stands for vid-ol, and signifies a thing "seen"; a visible sign representing something real. Idolatry does little harm to the few who can "see" what is real and lasting beneath religious rites and symbols, but idolaters who blindly worship forms, whether in or out of church, are in danger of losing God's most precious gift to man—independence of thought.

IV

THE STORY OF THE MAHÂ-BHÂRATA[1]

HAVING established their rule in the Punjab, the Hindus pushed further east, and founded kingdoms all along the River Ganges as far down as Patna. Two tribes became prominent, the Bhâratas near Delhi, and the Panchâlas beyond the city of Agra. They once waged a fierce war, perhaps in the same remote age when the city of Troy was besieged by the Greek armies. The great war of the Bhâratas, in which all principalities throughout the Gangetic valley were involved, is the subject of the Mahâ-Bhârata. The poem is a rich storehouse of mythological lore. Legends are grouped around history, similar to the Nibelung Lay which is also a

[1] The epics of India reflect the heroic age which followed close on the Mantra period. On these grounds, the Mahâ-Bhârata has been dealt with immediately after the Vedic poetry, although the extant texts do not represent the original epic. None of the epical or legal literature of the Hindus was composed before Buddha.

poetic, yet true representation of the battles fought between the Huns and the allied forces of the Franks and Burgundians.

We subjoin the story of the Mahâ-Bhârata:

Ninth in descent from the first Bhârata ruler came Kuru, the ancestor of Pându and other car-borne chiefs. After King Pându's decease, his blind brother, Dhritarâshtra, succeeded to the throne of the Bhâratas or Kurus. The Pândava brothers (that is the name given to the five sons of Pându) were brought up at their uncle's Court together with their cousins, the Kaurava Princes. Kaurava really means 'relating to the Kurus,' but in the Mahâ-Bhârata the word is applied to Dhritarâshtra's sons only, and never to the Pândavas.[1]

At that time, Drupada was reigning over the Panchâla people. He had slighted the noble Drona, who retaliated by taking service with the rival power. The Kuru Court then stayed at Hastinapur, half-way between Simla and Delhi. There the foreign courtier offered to train the young Princes in all knightly

[1] Like the names of other ancient heroes, Kuru is a title rather than a proper name. As a duke is the head of a duchy, so the Kuru was chief of the Kula or Hindu clan.

accomplishments. He was accepted as their tutor, and after a few years the blind monarch, gratified with the result, gave Drona means to march against Drupada, and punish the royal offender. A Kuru army invaded Panchâla Land, and conquered half the kingdom.

In deference to his late brother's wishes, Dhritarâshtra had appointed the eldest Pândava as heir to the crown; but so violently were the jealous Kauravas opposed to what they considered an act of injustice that the feeble old King, at last, yielded to their grievances. Prince Duryodhan, the eldest Kaurava, was now made heir-apparent, and it was owing to his spite and intrigues that the five Pândavas were sent into exile. Duryodhan, in his iniquity, even gave secret orders to set fire to the house where his banished cousins were sleeping. But they were warned of the evil design, and escaped into the forest.

Among noble Hindu maidens it was a time-honoured custom to have their suitors invited to a military tournament, and bestow heart and hand on the gallant knight who proved himself first champion in a passage-of-arms and the ensuing games of chivalry.

This ceremony of choosing a husband was known by the name of swayamvara.

While the Pândavas lived concealed in the woods, a proclamation was issued that the daughter of King Drupada was going to hold a swayamvara, and that the Princess had fixed her mind on a husband who excelled in archery. Arjun, one of the five brothers, heard the royal message, and being a master in the craft of handling the bow, betook himself to the Panchâla capital. The ancient city looked gay on that happy occasion; festoons of flowers hung across the streets, and the houses were decorated with tapestry and bunting. The Prince, disguised as a Brahmin, mingled with the joyful crowd that thronged outside the palace court. A flourish of martial instruments announced the arrival of the suitors. As the noble combatants entered the lists, every eye was fixed on them, and the shouts and acclamations of the spectators sufficiently attested the popularity of the entertainment. And again all eyes turned and gazed eagerly when the palanquin of Princess Draupadi appeared on the scene of combat. She was in bridal dress, and had a garland on her arm. The bow on which the youthful rivals were to

try their skill was so heavy that it had to be carried by several stout yeomen of the King's Household. None but a young Brahmin could shoot the arrow through a revolving ring into the target set up on high. The high-born damsel, with a deep blush, slipped the fragrant wreath over the victor's neck, thus indicating her royal pleasure to marry him. The rejected suitors all belonged to the Kshatriya or military caste. Their merry laughter suddenly died away, and their quivering lips showed clearly the general resentment that was felt because a priest had been preferred to a noble. Prince Arjun then threw off the Brahmin's surplice, and made himself known as a true-born Kshatriya.

We have spun out the tale in order to lay stress on the animosity which existed between the Indian clergy and nobility at the time of the Bhârata War. The Aryan in the Punjab had been ploughman, soldier, and family priest, all in one person, but when his descendants settled in the valley of the Ganges, sacrificial ritual, warfare, and agriculture developed so rapidly that a division of labour became necessary. Social sets arose which were exclusively engaged in clerical or military work, or in farming. When the crops were

plentiful and exceeded home consumption, the surplus was exchanged for cattle, slaves, and useful implements; this was the origin of trade and banking in India. While the two higher castes comprised the lords spiritual and temporal, the rest of the people, mostly farmers and salesmen, were collectively known as villagers or vaishyas.[1] Both kshatriyas and vaishyas began to feel uneasy at the growing influence of the cultured Brahmins, who not only claimed the monoply of sacrificial

[1] "Settling down" as a householder is expressed in the Aryan languages by the root *vish.* The Romans changed vish to *vic*, the Greeks to *vec*, the people of England and Germany to *wich* or *wick.*

Village is derived from Latin, and stands for *vic*lage, *i.e.*, settlement. Economy is a Greek word. It signifies housekeeping, and was pronounced *vec*onomy by the early Hellenes. The Aryan love of home life is also shown in Teutonic names such as Green*wich*, originally no more than a "village-green" with a few straggling huts, and Sles*wick*, the cradle of the English race. Sleswick is short for Slei's wick, the Slei being a river which flows between Kiel and Flensburg. The first arrival of Englishmen on British soil took place at Pegwell Bay, near Ramsgate, fifteen hundred years ago, and one of the earliest English settlements on the sandy coast, some five miles south of the Bay, was Sand*wich*, the "village on the sands." In Ancient India, a settlement was called *vish*, and *vaish*ya means settler or villager.

direction and Vedic exposition, but, in a later age, made it a divine law to be consulted in every question of conscience and religion.

The Pândavas, having gained a powerful ally in King Drupada, now demanded their rightful share of Kuruland. Dhritarâshtra agreed to assign them the barren waste west of the River Jumna where Yudhishthir, the eldest brother, built the city of Delhi. The Kauravas, on the other hand, held sway over the fertile plains between the Jumna and Ganges. The gradual territorial expansion and national prosperity of the Pândava state aroused Duryodhan's jealousy, and he revolved a dark scheme in his mind when he invited his cousins to some Court festivities to be held at Hastinapur. Yudhishthir, accepting a friendly challenge to a game of dice, staked gold and silver, chariots and elephants, but always lost; and the heavy losses only added to his gambling spirit. Duryodhan, by unfair means, won all his opponent's wealth, cheating him out of palaces and cities, land and people, and his royal crown. The unfortunate Pândavas were homeless again. The stipulation was that they should be wanderers for twelve years, and if the Kauravas failed to espy

them during an additional twelvemonth of settled life, that then Yudhishthir should receive his country back. And, again, the five brothers set out on their pitiful journey, seeking the wild jungle and lonesome river banks where none would mock them in their sore affliction. Draupadi went with them, no longer in rich garments, but a barefooted beggar-maid.

> "And they killed the forest red-deer, hewed the gnarled forest wood,
> From the stream she fetched the water, cooked the humble daily food."
>
> . . . .
>
> "Rishis came to good Yudhishthir, sat beside his evening fires,
> Many olden tales recited, legends of our ancient sires." [1]

The forest life of the brothers, full of hardship and adventures, is told in the Vana Parva or Jungle Book which, with its beautiful stories and sage instructions, is one of the most attractive portions of the Mahâ-Bhârata.

In the thirteenth year of banishment, the Pândava Princes came to Matsyaland in menial disguise. One was clad as a cowherd, another found employment in the royal kitchen, a

[1] The passages quoted from the Mahâ-Bhârata are translated by Mr Romesh Dutt; those from the Râmâyana by Mr Ralph Griffith.

third in King Virâta's stables, and fair Draupadi was accepted into the Queen's Household as a waiting-woman. Ten uneventful months passed by, and the exiles rejoiced that their days of adversity would soon be over. But as the year was drawing to its close, the commander of the Matsya forces caught sight of Draupadi and made love to the Princess. When she would not listen to his gallant addresses, he was rude enough to insult her, and Bhîma, the second brother, not suffering the affront, killed the nobleman in a frenzy of passion.

In the meantime, Duryodhan's emissaries were searching every city of Hindustan without being able to trace the banished Princes.[1] But the spies brought intelligence of the Matsya disturbances, and also reported that Virâta and the pick of his soldiers had left for the south of Matsyaland to repel a hostile tribe from the borders. The wily Kauravas, profiting by this state of affairs, planned an

[1] Hindustan is the land between the Himâlaya and Vindhya Mountains, while the rest of India, south of the Vindhyas, is known as the Dekhan. During morning prayers, the ancient dwellers by the Ganges shores would turn eastward to the rising sun, so that the south of India was *dekh*an, *i.e.*, on their right hand (*dex*ter in Latin).

immediate raid into the King's northern provinces famous for their fine breed of sheep and horses. Young Uttara, the son of Virâta, was too inexperienced to make adequate preparations for the pursuit of the Kaurava marauders and the recovery of the captured cattle. Arjun was ordered to drive the Prince's chariot, but the unaccustomed sight of the enemy disheartened the youth, and his courage failed him. In this emergency, the charioteer called out: "I am Arjun!" and begged Uttara not to be despondent, but to trust in him. And Arjun, defying all danger, like fierce Patroclus,

> "rushed along the plains
> With foaming coursers and with loosened reins,"

and blew his deafening conch-shell on encountering the Kauravas. His colossal strength and fearlessness struck terror into their lines, and they fled in wild confusion like crowded kine before the lion's roar.[1]

[1] Ancient warfare often commenced with cattle raids, transformed by the saga-teller to heroic deeds of chivalry. The Cuchulain epic, which sparkles with all the brilliant fancy of Irish romance, is founded on the creaghs of the Connaught and Ulster men, just as the forays of the Kuru clans were worked into the Mahâ-Bhârata.

When King Virâta returned and was told who his five retainers really were, he welcomed them cordially, and being under a special obligation to Arjun, readily offered his friendship and alliance. And now the time had come for Yudhishthir to reclaim his forfeited realm, but Duryodhan evaded a direct answer, merely observing that Arjun had been seen within the appointed time.

The Pândavas then summoned a council of war at Virâta's capital. Their cousin Krishna came over from Gujarat, and many confederates were present. King Drupada, who had not forgotten the humiliation he had received at Dhritarâshtra's hands, made a warlike speech, and recommended that the allied troops should be mobilised at once. After him the wise Krishna rose and addressed the council: "First sue for honourable peace," said he. "Should the Kauravas decline to give up the land which my noble cousins claim, there will be time enough to declare war." The force and directness of the appeal had the desired effect, and the assembled Râjas decided to negotiate for peace, but if no concessions were made, to prepare for war.

The Kauravas were no less anxious than

the Pândavas to have Krishna on their side. Duryodhan, as well as Arjun, endeavoured to gain the support of their powerful relative. The poem narrates that both arrived in his palace at the same hour. It was very early in the morning, and Krishna was still asleep. Duryodhan rudely pushed his way into the bedchamber and took a seat at the head of Krishna's couch; but Arjun followed meekly, and remained standing at the foot of the bed. When the Prince awoke, his eye fell first on Arjun. After listening to the request of his cousins, Krishna declared that he personally would not fight against his kinsfolk; he would join neither side, but was willing to lend his soldiers to one party, and his advice to the other. As he had noticed Arjun first, he called on him to take his choice. Full of reverence for Krishna, the young Pândava begged to be favoured with his cousin's ripe counsel, and Duryodhan was exceedingly glad to secure a strong reinforcement of troops on such easy terms.

At Arjun's special wish, Krishna went to Hastina Town to try once more to avert the impious war, and bring about a friendly understanding.

"Unto thee, O Dhritarâshtra ! Pându's sons in homage bend,
And a loving, peaceful message through my willing lips they send.

"Take their love, O gracious monarch ! Let thy closing days be fair,
Let Duryodhan keep his kingdom, let the Pândavs have their share.

"Call to mind their noble suffering, for the tale is dark and long
Of the outrage they have suffered, of the insult and the wrong."

The Kauravas were stirred by the eloquent appeal, except Duryodhan, who flatly refused to restore the confiscated land. The good old king had tears in his sightless orbs as he said :

"Listen, dearest son Duryodhan ! shun this dark and fatal strife,
Cast not grief and death's black shadow on thy parent's closing life !"

but Duryodhan blazed up angrily :

"Town nor village, mart nor hamlet, help us righteous gods in heaven,
Spot that needle's point can cover shall not unto them be given !"

Not baffled by the failure of his diplomatic mission, Krishna tried to win Karna, one of

the chieftains, by expatiating on the justice of the Pândava cause. But all his persuasion was in vain. Karna disdained to be faithless to the Kaurava standard to which he had pledged his honour.

And now war was imminent. Bhîshma, the venerable uncle of Pându and Dhritarâshtra, marched at the head of the Kauravas, while Draupadi's brother was made commander-in-chief of the Pândava forces. The armies met not far from Delhi, and gave each other battle on the memorable plains of Kurukshetra.[1]

"Like foemen stood on either side
Kinsmen and friends by dearest ties allied,
There fathers, sons, and holy teachers stood,
Uncles and brothers, near in love and blood."

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[1] Kurukshetra = Kurufield. The literal sense of kshatriya is kshetra-owner, *i.e.*, landed proprietor, lord of the land.

A spread eagle wrought in gold adorned the sceptre of Imperial Cyrus, whose name has been interpreted as Kuru or "Lord of Clans." However, the regal title borne by the sovereign-kuru or overlord of Iran's ancient clans seems to be related to *kyr*ie (lord) and *chur*ch (the Lord's house) rather than to kuru. At all events, the royal warrior who now graces the throne of Persia is no longer styled kuru, but *shah*, which is a clipping of *ksha*triya. The Greek equivalent of kshetra denotes "possessions"—more particularly fields and flocks.

The carnage was fearful, and fortune favoured Duryodhan's side. The Pândava host was routed wherever Bhîshma fought. The aged warrior-priest stood tranquil on his chariot, which bore a lofty palm stem with the Kuru flag—five pale silver stars sewn on to a golden ground. Arjun, unwilling to slaughter his kith and kin and the old friends of his boyhood, held aloof from the deadly fray until Krishna gently rebuked the Prince, and admonished him to serve his country like a good kshatriya. "You must learn to sacrifice lower to higher duties. Fight, cousin! grieve neither for the living nor the dead. Life cannot slay nor is life ever slain."[1] And Arjun's ape-bannered car drawn by a team of milk-white steeds, flashed in the brunt of battle, and, like a forest fire, the mighty archer consumed his foes. And as the surge of victory rose and fell, the various camps resounded with shouts of joy or wailing. Such havoc had been wrought in the Pândava ranks that, on the evening

[1] The meaning is that death only affects the body, while life itself is eternal. The dialogues which Krishna held with Arjun on the battlefield are the subject of the Bhagavad Gîta, the holiest song of India.

of the ninth day, Yudhishthir was in blank despair, and looked on the struggle as hopeless. Bhîshma was all-triumphant; none could resist the onslaught of the tiger-hero, who, vying with the purple sunset, crimsoned the blood-stained earth. But, on the following day, Arjun, urged on by Krishna, drew Gândîva, bow of celestial make, and the never-erring shaft transfixed the illustrious grandsire.

When Bhîshma had fallen, Drona took his place. By him the hated Drupada was slain, but the Panchâla Prince, frantic with filial grief, hurled his weapon at the proud preceptor, who sank lifeless in the sand.

> "Drona slept and gallant Drupad, for their earthly task
> was done,
> Vengeance fired the son of Drona 'gainst the royal
> Drupad's son,"

and the clash of arms raged with unabated vigour around the noble dead.

The next Kaurava leader was haughty Karna, a half-brother of the Pândavas. His cruel lance pierced Bhîma's valiant son, but the boy found an avenger in his uncle Arjun, who laid Karna low. On the eighteenth day of battle Duryodhan fell,

mortally wounded by his cousin Bhîma, and Pându's sons were left unchallenged victors on the field.[1]

V

THE ORIGIN OF THE MAHÂ-BHÂRATA

Old popular songs are afloat in every country long before critic or scholar fix their literary form. Has the Mahâ-Bhârata sprung from the genius of a single poet, or was it common national property—a careless bunch of flowers that grew wild in the country? The question appeals to personal taste rather than learned argument.

Love of poetry and music is universal.

[1] Final *a* and *n* are occasionally omitted in the modern use of Greek and Latin names, Helen taking the place of Helena, Plato of Platon, and so on. We have followed the classical precedent with regard to several Sanskrit words.

Thus Arjun and Duryodhan stand for Arjuna and Duryodhana, *râja* (king) for râjan, *karma* (character) for karman. *Brahma* (God) and *âtma* (soul) are short for Brahman and âtman; *yogi* (saint), *swâmi* (religious teacher), and *gnâni* (philosopher) for yogin, swâmin, and gnânin.

The whole of Nature, in spite of discordant notes, vibrates in sweet harmony, and strikes a sympathetic chord in the human breast. From time immemorial, the Aryan nations have cultivated sympathy with all created life, and that is why the gift of the seer and poet has been so abundantly bestowed upon the race. The forefathers of the Hindus were aglow with a joyous sense of the boundless soul in Nature, and their own soul thrilled in response, and burst out in Vedic song. They felt the divine (deva) element in the twinkling star and foaming torrent, in the moaning winds and whispering leaves. And the devas became the strength and defence of their simple fervent hearts. And after smiting and putting to confusion the loud-yelling barbarians who knew of no sacrifice to the bright gods, the victorious warrior-poets of Ancient India gave praise and thanks to the Devas, and sang the mighty deeds which the gods, through them, had wrought.[1]

[1] As *veda* has sprung from the root *vid* (=seer, sage), so *deva* from *div* (=shining, bright). Latin "dies," short for *dives*, is the "bright" side of time, the day-time, and the luminaries "shining" in the firmament were named Devas in Sanskrit. But behind the brilliant galaxy of the Asiatic skies and the gay imagery of a profuse nature, the old Aryan thinkers

Itihâsas or national legends narrating the heroic feats of the Dasyu War must have been current in the Punjab during the Vedic Age, and similar poetry was cultivated at the refined Gangetic courts where minstrels held an honoured place. Royal feast and sacred rite were graced by their presence. They knew the ancient ballads by heart, and were familiar with the genealogy of noble families. The rhapsodist preluded and accompanied his recital on the vîna or lute. The spell-bound audience would fondly repeat the remembered verses until hill and valley were ringing with the beauty of the song. At a later time, the scattered lays of the itinerant

felt a divine power—the everlasting source of earthly grandeur and splendour. The rishis of India knew long before Plato that even the fairest landscape and the saintliest life are but imperfect images of what is true and perfect. They had fully realised what St John realised ages after them, that the radiance of an illumined soul, like the sunshine which dances on the gold-tinged ripples of the mountain-girt lake, is at best a broken light reflecting the brighter light of Heaven which shines on the darkness of created life. What wonder, then, that the Aryans called eternal things bright and shining—*deva* in Sanskrit, and *div*ine in English? The French word for God—*Dieu*—is derived from Latin deus or dius, originally *div*us, *i.e.*, the shining one.

gleemen were picked up by learned pundits, and skilfully woven into a running series of poetic narrative. Such a collection of poetry relating to the Bhârata War appears to be the Mahâ-Bhârata, and it was probably arranged in its present form by various vyâsas or compilers. Popular fancy soon ascribed the cluster of national songs to an individual poet Vyâsa, just as Bishop Percy's name is associated with his collection of old English ballads. The Mahâ-Bhârata could hardly have been the outcome of one mind. Even external evidence points to a group of poets. If the Paradise Lost and the Nibelung Lied were placed by the side of the Æneid and Iliad, their combined length would fall short of the Mahâ-Bhârata.

It was only natural that, after the Great War, the Kurus or Bhâratas should have patronised the joyous troubadours who perpetuated the glorious memory of their ancestors represented in the epic as the Pândava brothers. Poetry seems to have enjoyed a high reputation among the Kuru clans, for Hindu minstrels and actors are called bhâratas or bhats unto this day.

VI

THE RÂMÂYANA POEM

But it was not only the stirring episodes of the Mahâ-Bhârata which the bards recited; the Râmâyana has gained even greater popularity among the masses of India. The name means Râma's Adventures, and the author is Vâlmîki. The geographical range of the poem extends as far south as the Dekhan and the isle of Ceylon; hero and heroine are natives of countries which were colonised by the eastward-pressing Hindus long after Kuru and Panchâla Land. On these grounds, the romantic Râmâyana is generally referred to a later date than the martial Mahâ-Bhârata. The Râmâyana has been the inexhaustible source of the Hindu theatre for more than a thousand years. We again summarise the contents.

The Videhas of Tirhut and the Koshalas of Oudh were friendly neighbours. Sîta, a Videha Princess, married Râma, the eldest Koshala Prince. The joys and sorrows of

their wedded life are the centre round which the story of the Râmâyana gathers. In an unguarded moment, Râma's father promised one of his Queens to banish the youth for fourteen years, and secure to her own son, Bharata, the royal succession.

Râma was a dutiful son, and left Koshala Land—

> "Farewell then, my country, farewell for the present!
> In forests of south shall my footsteps now roam,—
> On Nilgiri Mountains where yogis omniscient
> Have taken their âshram, their heavenly home."

His brother Lakshman and young Sîta shared his exile in Dandaka Forest situated between the Vindhya Woods and the River Godavery. Râma, devout by nature and chastened by misfortune, frequently paid visits to the vânaprasthas or forest sages. They were old men as a rule, ever ready to help and advise, and led a contemplative life in a quiet âshrama (hermitage) near some village where they could cultivate their flower beds and remain undisturbed in prayer and meditation. St Agastya was so favourably impressed with Râma's earnestness that the sage gave him a magic arrow as a help in danger to come. All the elements had contributed to the never-failing weapon. The

wind had given swiftness of motion, the sun red heat to its point, and ether made it all-pervasive.

Soon after Râma's departure the old King died of grief and shame, and young Bharata succeeded to the Crown. Being conscientious and nobler-minded than his scheming mother, the new ruler's first act was to set out with a cavalcade and recall the rightful King.

Chitrakûta, Râma's forest abode before he crossed the Vindhyas, is a lonely mountain peak in Bundelkhund. The wild beauty of the spot has long been consecrated into a city of temples and shrines. The picturesque heights were then swarming with monkeys, as the legend narrates, and covered with a profusion of tropical growth. Now they are adorned with architecture and sculpture representing favourite scenes from the Râmâyana.

Râma's answer to Bharata was that his lamented father's death did not cancel the given promise. He meant to stand by his parent's word and abide the allotted time of banishment. When Bharata reluctantly departed, the saintly Prince gently admonished him not to feel angry with his royal

mother, but ever treat her with filial respect and tenderness.

> "True is Râma, great of soul,
> Bountiful is he and modest, every sense does he control,
> Gentle, brave,—all creatures love him; keeping in the righteous way,
> Numbered with the holy hermits, pure and virtuous as they."

The aboriginal tribes of Lanka or Ceylon are the Râkshasas of the poem. Their King was Râvana, who represents all that is evil and self-indulgent in man, while gentle Râma embodies the spirit of self-sacrifice. Râvana was a monster in shape, and a brute in sentiment. He and his friend Mârîcha had been ascetics in their youth, and attained to psychic powers. They could change their bodies at will and mimic human voices. Râvana's sister had met Râma in his solitary wanderings, and become love-smitten with the handsome Prince. When Râma rejected her advances, the honey on her lips turned to poison in her heart, and all her thoughts were bent on revenge. She went back to her brother and dwelt on Sîta's charms so artfully that Râvana became inflamed with carnal passion, and swore that he would tear the young wife from Râma's loving arms into his foul embraces. He ordered

his aerial car, and drove with Mârîcha to Dandaka Forest.

Very poetical is Vâlmîki's description of the enchanted car which, like the famous shield of Achilles, was of divine workmanship.

> "Thereon with wondrous art designed
> Were blue-green birds of varied kind,
> And many a sculptured serpent rolled
> His twisted coil in burnished gold.
> And steeds were there of noblest form,
> With flying feet as fleet as storm.
> And elephants with deftest skill
> Stood sculptured by a silver rill,
> Each bearing on his trunk a wreath
> Of lilies from the flood beneath.
> There Lakshmi, Beauty's heavenly Queen,
> Wrought by the artist's skill, was seen
> Beside a flower-clad pool to stand,
> Holding a lotus in her hand."

Râma, his brother, and Sîta were enjoying the cool of the evening when they saw a graceful fawn lightly skipping by. Its sun-lit coat shone like liquid gold, and Sîta expressed a wish to have the pretty creature. Râma, not slow where his wife's wishes were concerned, ran after the deer to catch it. The cunning Mârîcha who had transformed himself into a deer did not allow himself to be caught, but kept close enough to his pursuer to tempt

him ever farther away from Sîta. At last, Râma felt impatient and sent an arrow after the wily fawn. Mârîcha uttered a loud cry in Râma's voice, and Sîta, startled by the well-known sound, hurried Lakshman off to her husband's assistance. And now she was left alone in her anguish, and all Nature looked terrified to her alarmed mind. A mist, of a sudden, veiled the sun, and the merry birds had stopped their song. The flowers began to tremble, and drooped their perfumed heads. A heavy depression lay on Sîta's limbs. She uplifted her eyes and beheld a holy friar clad like the forest trees in sombre dress of bast and bark as Hindu ascetics used to wear. Her whole frame shook with fear. Râvana—for he was under the friar's cloak—had no time to lose as Râma might be back at any moment. With the brute force of a tiger he seized his prey and speedily returned to his palace at Lanka.

Râma, in his distress, wandered about the woods to find his Sîta. When he learned that she was imprisoned in the Râkshasa city, he hastened down to the south coast. One of the rude forest tribes whom the poet has caricatured as monkeys would not let him pass, but Râma forced his way and, by some

brave and generous act, even gained the friendship of the uncouth foresters. An army of monkeys volunteered to march against the ravisher. The Hindus of the Epic Age do not seem to have known the art of shipbuilding and navigation. The Râmâyana has no catalogue of ships like the Iliad, but relates how troops of monkeys, after reaching the seashore, flew northward, and brought back huge pieces of rock which they had torn off the Himâlayas. Crags and trees were dropped in the Ceylonese Channel and the hoary ocean god himself joined them to a commodious bridge. The celestial host looked on in astonishment, and raised the anthem on high—"As long as heaven and earth endure, this bridge shall endure and speak of Râma's fame!"[1] And now the army crossed and besieged the city of Lanka. The Râkshasa forces poured out of the city gates, one stout detachment after the other, but the brave monkeys held their own. Seven days they fought with varying success. At last, Râvana made a sally and, with raised battle axe, rushed against Râma. But before the

[1] The rocky islets scattered between Ceylon and the Indian continent are still known as Râma's Bridge among the natives. The English call it Adam's Bridge.

deadly blow could fall, Agastya's magic arrow flashed from Râma's bow and killed the demon-king.

Sîta was free, but her trials were not yet ended. Râma thought her purity must be sullied by Râvana's contact. The test of guilt or innocence by ordeal is not unknown in the history of Europe. The glow of Walter Scott's genius revives the disused custom in our fancy when once more we delight in the eternal youth of the Fair Maid of Perth. But the usage was not restricted to Old England; it also prevailed in Ancient India. Saddened and offended with Râma's misgivings, Sîta had a funeral pyre erected, and leaped into the greedy flame; but Agni, the god of fire, restored the stainless wife unhurt to the overjoyed husband.

> "In his tears the contrite Râma clasped her in a soft embrace,
> And the fond forgiving Sîta in his bosom hid her face."

The happy pair, and Lakshman, quitted Ceylon and, after an absence of fourteen years, returned to Ayodhya, the Koshala capital, where Bharata handed the royal

insignia to Râma, and paid him all honours due to a king.[1]

Râma is the ideal knight of India. Millions of hero-worshippers feel inspired by the records of his saintliness and chivalry—the very qualities which make King Arthur the idol of romantic hearts. Râma receives divine honours from the Hindus. They pray to his spirit, and believe that he dwells with the blessed gods in Heaven.

> "The knight's bones are dust,
> His good sword is rust,
> His spirit is with the saints I trust!"

VII

BRÂHMANAS AND UPANISHADS

A NEW age had grown up that knew nothing of the old life in the Punjab. Many Vedic passages were no longer understood, the

[1] The district of *Ayodhya* is now called *Oudh.* Bharata, whose mother came from the Punjab, and was perhaps a Bhârata Princess, must not be confused with his namesake, the tribal father of the Kuru clans.

very language of the hymns was antiquated. Interpretations became necessary, and were, together with the text, handed down from generation to generation. The versions rapidly increased in number, and varied in different families. The Brahmins, intent on the dignity of their time-hallowed institution, brought harmony into the discrepancies, and thus a large literature sprung up called the Brâhmanas. They are books dealing with sacrificial details, and supporting the established dogma on the authority of the Vedas. The form of worship was rigidly fixed. Great care was taken to preserve the purity of the Vedic text. Minute attention was paid to phonetics and accidence. The officiating priest had it in his power to pronounce an elaborate sacrifice null and void if, during prayers, a single accent was put on the wrong syllable. Travelling scholars gathered round reputed teachers whose schools became the centres of intellectual life. Not only questions of grammar and ritual were discussed, but speculation took a bolder flight and enquired into the relationship between God and the soul. There must have been a stirring activity in the universities and at the royal courts of ancient Hindustan. The King of

Benares, and Janaka of Videha, the father of Princess Sîta, are frequently mentioned in the literature of the time as prominent leaders of thought. Janaka, in his old age, renounced the glories of the throne, and became a vânaprastha. Thus he anticipated another royal sage, even greater than himself—Prince Gotama, the founder of Buddhism.

The theological speculation of the age is embedded in the Upanishads, which are really appendices to the Brâhmanas. As the New Testament dispenses with the Jewish ritual, yet is part of the same Bible which contains the Mosaic law books, even so are the Upanishads reckoned among the canonical books of the Veda, although they reject the Brahminic rites as useless. Upanishad means a forest gathering—disciples "sitting near" their teacher engaged in religious converse. The Upanishads are not a coherent system of philosophy like that of Spinoza, or Berkeley, or Kant, but may be more appropriately compared to the Gospel of St John and other scriptural theosophy.[1] They are full

[1] The ancients meant by theosophy, intuitive wisdom which shines in pure and selfless hearts. But the modern teachings which are labelled theosophical, though they have appropriated the venerable name and

of poetry and fanciful narrative, loose in thought and, every now and again, sparkling with flashes of philosophic light. The Vedic gods are ignored, and the idea of Divine Immanence takes their place.

"He who dwelling on earth is other than the earth, whom the earth knoweth not, whose body is the earth, who is unattached and, therefore, has power over the earth, that is God, O Uddâlaka! that is thy soul."[1]

In the age of the Brâhmanas, it was customary for Aryan boys to live with a tutor, generally a priest, for a number of years, in order to study the Veda under his direction. The relation between teacher and pupil was a sacred bond; tuition meant tutelage and adoption in those days. The preceptor loved and fostered his nursling-boy who, in his turn, might become a beacon-

the occult phraseology which has gathered round it, have caught little of the hidden spirit, the soul's truest and best. Far sounder is the teaching supplied by Master Eckhart (A.D. 1300), and Jacob Bœhme (1600), two German theosophists; but what is the pale light of their veiled utterances compared to the vivid realisation and fearless language of the golden Upanishads?

[1] Brihad Âranyaka, *i.e.*, Great Jungle Upanishad III., 7. 3.

light of knowledge, and transmit the science of the age to his own foster-children.[1]

Satyakâma was the child of a poor servant-girl, and when the guru (teacher) who was to instruct him enquired for his family name, the truthful boy answered: "I do not know, sir, of what gotra (family) I am. I asked mother, and she said: 'In my youth when I moved about much as a servant I conceived thee. I cannot tell of what gotra thou art.'"

"Surely, you must be of noble birth!" exclaimed the guru. "Only a noble soul can be so open and frank of speech. Stay with me, I will teach you the Veda, for you have not turned aside from the truth."

And the young student was told to bring fuel to the sacrificial hearth; this was an old Indian rite symbolical of the performer's

[1] The foster-parent had a life-long claim on the affection as well as worldly possessions of his adopted pupils and sometimes future heirs. "In default of kindred," says an old Indian law tract, "the preceptor inherits, and failing him the disciple." Literary fosterage was well known in Pagan Ireland where the Druids acted as the guardians of national education. Miss Hull, in a charming volume entitled PAGAN IRELAND (David Nutt, London, 1904), dwells on the Gaelic custom, pp. 128-131.

pass away, but the Veda is everlasting. The sacred words are the eternal type of things, and the infinite display of created forms is but a reflection of Divine Thought become manifest in the Veda.[1]

VIII

SÛTRA LITERATURE

THE Brâhmanas increased so much in volume that their contents were in danger of being lost. We must bear in mind that no handy text-books circulated in that early age, but all learning was imparted by word of mouth, and had to be committed to memory, line by line, and chapter by chapter. Abridgments of the diffuse Brâhmanas were much needed, and the want was supplied in the form of sûtras or manuals prepared for the use of students. The sûtras gradually replaced the

[1] The Vedic Hymns are often spoken of as Vedas or Mantras, but Veda, in the singular, is a more general term, and includes the Brâhmanas and Upanishads.

Brâhmanas in the religious education of the country. They are called SMRITI or Remembrance, because tradition preserved them in the memory of man.[1]

The shrauta sûtras are condensed treatises on sacrificial observances. SHRUTI is Revelation, and shrauta means "relating to shruti."[2]

[1] When Buddhism first arose in India, the Sûtras in their present form were yet in the making. But in this book they are placed before the chapter on Buddha, after the Brâhmanas, because the Sûtras have grown out of Brahminic rites and precepts.

[2] As *Kaur*ava is derived from *Kur*u, so *shrau*ta from *shru*ti. The Veda (hymns, ritual and Upanishads) is accepted by orthodox Hindus as shruti, while the two epics and the sûtras, even the shrauta sûtras, are looked upon as smriti. The Aryan root *shru* means "hearing," and shruti is the whole body of Vedic knowledge expounded by the gurus, and "heard" by their disciples. Subsequently, the Brahmins interpreted the word as the inner monitor—the divine voice which the rishis "heard" in an exalted state of illumination.

Shru has not only taken root in the mental soil of India, but also among the Western Aryans who clipped the old root as usual. The Teutonic nations shortened *shru* to *hru*, the Slavs to sru or *sr*, and the Romans to cru or *cr*. But none of them could pronounce the letter *r* distinctly, and they helped themselves out of the difficulty by changing *r* to *l*. Parallel cases are not wanting in other languages. The Chinese, for instance, have no r in their alphabet, and invariably give it an l-sound whenever they come across the objectionable

One shrauta rite was observed after the marriage ceremony in the new home. Two sticks of sandalwood were smartly rubbed one against the other, and the fire in the

letter in foreign words imported from Eu*l*ope and Ame*l*ica.

Thus, *shru* underwent a second change in Europe, and became *hlu* in England, *sl* in Russia, and *cl* in Italy, all three expressing the idea of "hearing."

*Hlu*st was the name given by the Anglo-Saxons to the organ of hearing, the ear; *hlu*stan or, in its modern form, *li*sten literally means to "give ear." The old spelling of loud was *hlu*d, *i.e.*, "heard" all over the place, noisy. *Cl*amorous has different initials because it is of Latin descent.

A *cl*ient is a man who comes to "hear" what his legal adviser has to say, and when we speak of the "glorious" reign of a "celebrated" king, we use two words which, in old Latin, were *cl*oriosus and *cl*ebratus, and both meant "much heard of." The Sanskrit for "glory" is *shr*avas, and its Russian and Polish equivalent, as we might expect, is *sl*ava, while *sl*ovo signifies speech, *i.e.*, the spoken word which is "heard." *Sl*avonic is the national "speech" of the *Sl*avs or "speakers." Their German neighbours who could not speak Slavonic, were nicknamed dummies (NIEMIEZ in Polish). Some scholars interpret Slav as "glorious." But the Slavs are little given to national vainglory, and it is not likely that they should ever have styled themselves LA NATION GLORIEUSE. Slava came to mean "glory" in Russian, just as ârya came to mean "noble" in Sanskrit, long after the two names Slav and Aryan were fixed.

hearth was lighted with the spark produced. Bride and bridegroom would sit up together part of the night, say their prayers by the fireside, and endeavour to realise the divine spark in the earthly flame. The rite was called Agni-âdhâna.[1]

Most private ceremonies such as marriage, child-birth, or the burial of the dead, are briefly commemorated in the grihya sûtras. Grihya is the adjective "domestic." A special Day of the Dead, like the Fête des Morts in France, was set apart and held sacred. As we lay floral wreaths on the graves of our beloved, so the ancient Hindus offered shrâddha or oblations to their dear ones who had passed away.[2] Some grihya sûtras are short family prayers, others have reference to the celebrations of the new moon, harvest festival, and different holidays throughout the year.

[1] Literally "keeping up the fire." Sanskrit *agni* (the *ag*ile flame) is the same word as Latin *ignis*; to *ign*ite means to set on "fire."

[2] We have seen in a previous note that the Sanskrit letters *shr* correspond to *cr* in Latin. The Apostles' Creed begins with *Cr*edo, *i.e.*, I believe, and *shr*âddha is a "believer in the Veda." Offerings to the dead being in accordance with the Vedic *creed* were also called *shrâd*dha.

Shrauta and grihya rites constituted the holy sacraments. Being the same all over India they helped to strengthen the bond of fellow-feeling, and to unite the Hindu people from the Punjab to Cape Comorin, and from Bombay to Calcutta.

A nation is made up of families, and a code of civic duties is the natural outcome of the daily round of home duties. Law in India as in every other country has grown out of domestic customs. Grihya sûtras gave rise to dharma sûtras or law compendiums. It may interest the reader to know that marriage within at least four degrees of descent was prohibited in Ancient India, so that even the line of cousins' children had no legal title to be joined in holy matrimony. But no objection was raised to a Hindu marrying his wife's sister, even as the Jewish patriarch did not offend the Mosaic law because he wedded Leah and Rachel, the two daughters of Laban. Child-marriages and the burning of widows (suttee) were not sanctioned by the dharma sûtras, but are a graft of later growth.[1]

[1] Compulsory suttee was unknown in the Vedic age, although there may have been devoted Hindu wives who scorned to survive their wedded lord, and chose voluntary death, which they believed would give them inseparable union with the beloved.

The Upanishads were likewise arranged in a systematic form. Such theological manuals were called Brahma sûtras because they enquire into the nature of Brahma or God. Little intelligible by themselves, on account of their brevity, they proved useful as summaries indicating the thread of the teacher's arguments.[1] Many were the Brahma sûtras composed by the learned, but none save Bâdarâyan's are extant. They are abrupt and enigmatical like a table of contents, or a

[1] Sûtra, literally, thread of an argument, bears the same etymological relation to suture (sewing) as text to texture (weaving). The German word for text-book is leit-faden, *i.e.*, the "leading thread" or first principles woven into a fabric of connected thought. The loom and the spinning-wheel, without which no primitive household was complete, are fossilised both in extinct and living metaphor. In Merry Old England, the glee-men or "weavers of song" wove a charm of poetry round tribal feuds and cattle raids, and professional story-tellers in highly-coloured language spun never-ending yarns in the ale-house or on the village-green. The young *fe*llows at home had the care of the family *fee* or cattle, whilst their unmarried sisters were busy in the house as *spin*sters and sempstresses. In those days when matrimony and motherhood were looked upon as woman's most sacred duty to the race, the spinster was but rarely an old maid. But the age in which the Anglo-Saxon sempstress lived is comparatively modern

syllabus to a course of lectures on the Upanishads. Although the oral teaching of Bâdarâyan probably did not survive the generation of those he taught, yet he must have been a reputed theologian, since some of the greatest intellects of India, centuries after him, devoted a lifetime to the composition of bhâshyas or commentaries to his celebrated epitome, just as an English divine might write a running commentary on the Thirty-nine Articles of A.D. 1562. The best bhâshya to Bâdarâyan's sûtras was penned by Shankara who lived in the ninth century of our era. In depth of thought and soundness of argument, the commentary ranks by the side of Kant's famous critiques. Shankara has become the classical authority of the Vedânta school of philosophy. Vedânta is

and advanced. In the ruder Age of Stone, deerskins were stitched together with fibre threads and bone needles. Plaited bast was also worn by neolithic man, and this kind of garment has survived amongst Indian ascetics into historic times. The Indo-European tongues are eloquent in their testimony of early Aryan customs. Sewing-machines and the textile industry have grown out of the same rudimentary arts on which the loftier concepts of Brahma "sûtras" and philosophic "texts" were raised.

still the creed of educated Hindus, and Indian literature is steeped in Vedântic thought.[1]

IX

VEDÂNTA

The central teaching of Vedânta is that God and the soul are one. If they appear different, it is because human consciousness is too narrow to recognise their unity, until gnâna (self-knowledge) has conquered ahankâra, the limitations of the ego.[2] Vedânta

[1] Between Shankara's birth (788) and that of Schopenhauer, the originator of Christian Vedânta, intervene exactly a thousand years. The object of the Christian Vedânta movement is to bring the unhappy conflict between science and religion to an end by harmonising both with the ancient wisdom embedded in the Upanishads. Schopenhauer was born in the same year as Lord Byron, the poet of pessimism.

[2] The Platonists of Alexandria looked upon Christ as an emanation of the Godhead superior in degree, but equal in essence to the rest of mankind. This doctrine they called *gn*osis or spiritual co*gn*ition, and themselves *gn*ostics, *i.e.*, *kn*owers of the True. In order to call attention to the spiritual kinship which exists between Platonism and Vedânta, the spelling *gn*âna has been adopted in preference to the customary jnâna.

abounds in homely similes to illustrate the meaning of ahankâra whence all egoism springs, and of gnâna, without which there can be no salvation. The air in an inverted cup is shut off from the surrounding atmosphere, but once remove the cup, and all distinction ceases. One element remains, boundless and undivided. Ahankâra is like the cup, and those who make a constant effort to deny themselves, to break the shell of their hardened nature, succeed in the end in getting rid of the illusory self. No sooner is the mainspring of selfishness destroyed than âtma (the individual soul) is set free, and once more mingles with Brahma (the universal soul) who is all in all.

As rays issuing from the sun are not different from the sun, as billows rising on the sea are the same as the sea, as sparks flying from the fire are nothing but fire, so the soul coming from God is God. God is Love, and love alone is the true nature of the soul.

Vedânta means End of the Veda, its final lesson. What is taught in that last lesson is discrimination between soul and personality, which is like a veil over the soul. This veil of Nature which conceals the True is called

mâya in the language of Vedânta. An exuberance of poetry has grown round the word mâya which is feminine gender in Sanskrit, while âtma is masculine. Mâya is a charm-weaver, the arch-mage of the cosmos; her fairy wand conjures up the transient glories of this earth—the playground of our senses. She is the World-Mother who gives birth and individuality to the whole creation. Individual life, with its April tears and laughter, travels over an uncertain sea from the dawn of childhood to the last long sleep, but the soul is unbegotten and immortal. Mâya displays her seductive charms in order to captivate âtma, whose native air is freedom. If he yields to her witchery and becomes a slave to nature, a world of delusions and vanities emerges from Mâya's womb. The Indian notion of mâya comes very near the Christian conception of original sin. We are all born in mâya, and the shadows of inbred evil hover around us until the light of gnâna scatters them, and points the way from nature unto grace.[1]

[1] *Mâya* = *ma*tter. The mother provides a body for her babes; she cuts out their physical *mater*ial, so to speak; hence she is called *mater* in Latin. Material

Atheism is defined by the Vedântic doctors as unbelief in the divinity of the soul, but knowledge has saving power: when God is known, the heart is at rest, and the weary round of sansâra (transmigration) ends in eternal peace. Shankara declares that a righteous life and meritorious acts, though promoting godliness and preparing the heart for moksha (freedom), cannot directly save; the soul has yet to learn that it always has been, is now, and ever shall be divine, and nothing but divine.

However strange the doctrine that the soul is one with God may appear to us, there can be no doubt that Vedânta has been a blessing and a source of strength to untold numbers of Hindus who, without that guiding star, might have suffered moral shipwreck, tossed about as they have been in the contending waves of religious strife which has agitated India for several thousand years. Vedânta seems to us a practical creed which, if taken in earnest, cannot but enrich and ennoble life, in the

means literally "measurable." The idea of *mea*suring is at the root of *ma*tter as well as *mi*nd (*ma*nas in Sanskrit). Mind is the faculty of measuring, weighing, judging things. The Vedic hymns are called *Mantra* poetry because they are composed in a sacred *metre* or *measure*.

most exalted station as well as in the humblest position. Yet we cannot altogether agree with the band of enthusiasts who, at present, make propaganda for Vedânta in the West. We have a strong feeling that Vedânta will never take the place of Christian principle. Such endeavours are creditable because they mean well, but must of necessity fail, for the simple reason that they entirely ignore religious evolution. They can have no more success than a possible attempt to replace the English by the Italian language because of its softer sound to some ears; the tongue of Dante could never be natural, but at best artificial growth in the drawing-rooms of New York and London.

Again, the intrinsic merits of Vedânta are all to be found in Christianity if people will only take the trouble to search the Scriptures and their own hearts. The star of Bethlehem is but a humble flower in the garden of the soul, but like the shamefaced violet, is rich in hidden beauty. The weight of religion lies not altogether in philosophic depth, but even more in a pure and simple faith which can be made a practical standard in the manifold relations of every-day life. Such a faith, we believe, is Christianity. Yet these reflections

cannot blind us to the moral excellence and religious truth of Vedânta, and we sympathise with the Hindu people who look upon all missionary efforts to make them converts to Christianity as a national insult.[1]

The Russian Church does not interfere much with the belief of the Czar's Asiatic subject races, and the result is that there is far less disaffection among them than in British India. Moreover, the Hindus need no foreign preaching, they have religion to the fullest in their own Upanishads and Bhagavad Gîta.[2] But what they do need is better scientific training, to the end that they may not be pushed out of their own markets. India may yet enjoy economic prosperity if technical village schools subsidised by the Government could be opened in every district of importance. At present, her industries are fallen into decay, and to make matters worse, her people are heavily

[1] We are far from underrating the excellent work done by Christian missions in India, inasmuch as they provide instruction for the young, relieve the poor, and endeavour to raise the social status, especially of Hindu women.

[2] The Gospels are held no more sacred in Europe than the Bhagavad Gîta in India, where it is far more popular than the profound but often abstruse Upanishads. An oath taken on the Gîta is valid in Indian law courts.

taxed without being politically represented. The Roman Empire was held together by coercive laws and military force, and for this very reason tottered and fell fifteen hundred years ago. But the English ideal of Empire, far loftier and truer, is extension of local self-government and Imperial Federation. Great Britain has no desire to rule a crowd of slaves in her vast dominions beyond the seas, but rather looks forward to that "diviner day" when all her sons, independent of race and colour, shall be free members of the Empire, taking an adequate share of its responsibilities and, at the same time, helping to make their own national laws.

A larger proportion of native gentlemen in the Indian Army as well as Civil Service, and a good secular education provided for the masses, together with a living faith in Vedânta, are the best means we can think of for securing the future welfare of the people of India.

X

BUDDHISM

HINDU rule spread from the Ganges across the Vindhyas; what the sword could not conquer was aryanised by the power of the mind. Malva, in Central India, and Magadha, in the district of modern Patna, became flourishing kingdoms, although they did not rise to prominence for a long time to come. The priestly caste predominated until the bracing air of free religious enquiry threatened its very existence. The rationalistic age of India, as it has been called, is characterised by the rise of two great reform movements—Vedânta and Buddhism. Vedânta is orthodox and accepts the Vedic Word, but no longer in a literal sense. The interpretation of Scripture by the Vedântic theologians is extremely bold and independent.[1] Buddhism, on the other hand, is

[1] St Paul interpreted the rites and precepts of the Old Testament as freely as Shankara would have done if he had been a Christian. In the Epistle to the Romans (ii. 29), the Apostle defines circumcision not as a mere surgical operation on the skin, but as a divine operation in the heart. Again, in the First Epistle to

heterodox, and rejects the authority of the Vedas altogether. Buddha first preached the People's Gospel in B.C. 522, when Bimbisâra was King of Magadha. The conflict between the old-established faith and the Buddhist dissenters raged for two hundred years, and, when the Greek battalions of King Alexander invaded the Punjab (B.C. 327), the sun of Brahminism was setting, and the new star was shining in the East. At that time, Nanda sat on the throne of Magadha. His dynasty was overthrown by the rebel Chandragupta, who was the first to unite the North of India from Magadha to the Punjab under one Imperial Government. By birth a Shûdra, the Emperor was not likely to be hostile to a religion which swept away all social distinctions, and put Brahmin and Pariah on the same level. Buddhism reigned supreme in the land of its birth until the fifth century after Christ, when Brahminic influence once more became powerful.

the Corinthians (v. 8), leavened bread—the use of which during the Passover feast was forbidden by the Mosaic law, Exodus xii. 15—is symbolically explained as the leaven of malice and wickedness which should be rejected for the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. The Upanishads abound with allegories of a similar kind.

Gotama Buddha was born in Kapilavastu, a few days' caravan journey from Benares. His father governed one of the aristocratic republics in the ancient land of Oudh. The Prince—if that title may be applied to a Rajput or son of a ruling noble—showed early signs of an introspective mind. For hours he would muse alone, while his play-fellows enjoyed the healthy exercise of out-door games. And the boy's heart was heavy when he contemplated the beauty of Nature budding out in all these lovely shapes, but only meant to sink into an early grave. Whatever comes to life, he would reason, is doomed to change and decay. The bloom of youth will bleach into the snow of old age. Life lasts but a while, and is full of care and sorrow. Child-bed and death-bed are attended by suffering. Gratification of personal desires is bound up with pain, and each struggle of the individual to assert himself is but a cup of bitterness. The keenest joys are tinged with sadness. Ah, to be rid of life which is the cause of all this grief and anguish! Suicide is of no avail, it does not touch the root of the evil. Cut the full-blown roses, the bush is not dead, a mass of blossoms will burst forth again. Craving for life is the

root of life. To harbour no more delight in created things, to renounce all attachment to form and sense—that, indeed, might destroy the material out of which the individual is built up, and bring everlasting rest.

Moving on similar lines of thought, young Gotama easily persuaded himself to turn a recluse. One night, he parted from his beloved wife and new-born babe. He was under thirty years of age when he left his father's palace secretly. Not a ruler of men he wished to be, but their teacher, lover, friend.

"Full of hindrances is the household life, a path defiled by passion. Free as the air is the life of him who has renounced all worldly desires. How difficult it is for a man who dwells at home to live the higher life in all its fulness, purity, and bright perfection! Let me then cut off my hair and beard, let me wear orange-coloured robes, and go forth from the household life to the homeless state."[1]

The Prince first went to study theology under the Brahmins. But the rigid dogma

[1] The quotations in this chapter are selected from a translation by Professor Rhys Davids, but his words have, now and again, been altered so as to fit into the frame of our narrative.

which they taught impeded his soaring spirit. He scorned Vedic or any other authority. Personal experience was his only court of appeal in matters of religion. And the sacrificial rites repelled his gentle heart. He felt keenly for the suffering animals that were slaughtered for use on the altar. How can good come out of evil? Gotama asked himself. When the schools of theology failed to clear up his difficulties he looked out for other means of knowledge. It so happened that he saw five anchorites engaged in yoga, *i.e.*, methodical restraint of the mind and senses. The Prince gladly joined their company, and only after six years of earnest application he abandoned all ascetic practices as ultimately ineffectual. He found out that neither bodily torture nor mental abstraction can give freedom to the soul.

One day, we read, the Prince was sitting under a bo-tree, "in that devout meditation of the heart which springs from within," when suddenly a flood of light rushed into his soul, and the truth was revealed to the Buddha.[1] His doubts melted away like

[1] The founders both of Buddhism and Christianity are best known by Aryan names. *Buddha* means "illumined" in Sanskrit, and *Christ* "anointed" or

fleeting clouds in the summer sun, and Gotama realised that pity for all created life, love for love's sake, is true salvation from misery and sin.

"A man who is kind, full of love, and pure in heart, master of himself—he O Vâsettha, is near the blessed Nirvâna."

Nirvâna is regarded as a spiritual state where all thought of personality is extinguished. Everything in the way of self-denial tends towards it, while selfishness leads farther away from Nirvâna. As the countless ages of the past have contributed to what we are now, so the destinies of the future lie in the hands of the living.[1] A

consecrated in Greek. The word Buddha expresses a spiritual state rather than the historical personage who attained unto it, just as the Christ represents the spirit of consecration to the service of humanity. The Buddha is an eternal principle which was exemplified in Gotama to perfection.

[1] The same thought holds good collectively and individually. A man's "character" is shaped by the sum-total of his "doings" in the past; hence both words are rendered in Sanskrit by Karma, from kar (to do).

"Our deeds still travel with us from afar,
And what we have been makes us what we are."

Personal habits and conduct, both good and evil fortune, and the fate in store for us—all these ideas are expressed by the word Karma.

Buddhist does not look forward to the joys of a local heaven where he shall meet his friends in person. The meeting, in his opinion, takes place even now, and he accounts for the strong likes and dislikes which total strangers are often seen to take to one another by personal association in previous bodies. The ideal of Buddhists is the Impersonal, and their hope rests on the belief that self-sacrifice and sympathy with the rational as well as the dumb creation cannot die, that every loving thought and act of kindness will live on as an ennobling and cleansing impulse in the generations to come.

> "We can make our love sublime,
> And departing leave behind us
> Footprints in the sands of time.
>
> "Footprints that perhaps another
> Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
> A forlorn and shipwrecked brother
> Seeing shall take heart again."

On his way to Benares, the Buddha met the five yogis or ascetics with whom he had lived so long.

"When they saw him from a distance, one said to another: 'Friend, here comes Gotama. He has turned aside again from the sparing

use of the necessaries of life, and has recovered roundness of form, acuteness of sense, and beauty of complexion. Let us pay him no reverence, but as he is, after all, of a good family, he deserves the honour of a seat. Let us simply prepare a seat for him.'

"Then the Buddha, by the power that he had of knowing what was passing in the minds of all men, knew their thoughts. And concentrating that feeling of his love which was able to pervade the four quarters of the earth, he directed it specially towards them. And as he came nearer and nearer, they were unable to adhere to their resolve, and rising from their seats, they bowed low and paid reverence to the Buddha."

For nearly fifty years, the saint wandered through the valley of the Ganges, staff and almsbowl in hand, begging his bread from village to village. He comforted, and helped, and preached to the people, no respecter of caste, and the people loved him for his sweetness and humility. A small band of earnest followers were the first members of the Sangha or Buddhist Order which is now the leading church in Burma, Siam, and the Far East.

The new doctrine did not only appeal to

the easily-aroused masses, but also to the higher castes. Kshatriyas and Kings were among the Buddha's converts. Venerable Brahmins embraced and enthusiastically defended the reformed faith. Says the old priest Pingiya:

"Well, I praise that beautiful voice, the voice of him who is without stain and folly, who has left self-righteousness far behind.

"The darkness-dispelling Buddha, the all-seeing who knows all hearts: he has come nigh even unto me.

"And as a bird would pass by the dense jungle and take up his abode in the fruitful forest, even so I, leaving the men of narrow views, am like a swan that has gained the broad waters.

"Those who before explained to me the teaching of Gotama, only added to my doubts. There is but one, Gotama of great understanding, Gotama of great wisdom who has taught me the truth."

His friend rejoins, "Canst thou then stay away from him even for a moment, O Pingiya?" and the old man answers:

"Not even for a moment do I stay away from him, O Brahmin. I see him with my

mind's eye all day long. In reverencing him do I spend the night; therefore, methinks, he cannot be far from me.

"Belief and joy incline me to Gotama's doctrine; whichsoever way the saint goeth, that selfsame way my heart will turn.

"I am worn out and old and feeble. It is true my body cannot go. But in thought I always go there, for my heart, O Brahmin, is joined to him."

And lo! a golden light played round Pingiya's silver hair, and the Buddha appeared to him in a vision and said:

"As the faith of Vakkhali became set free from doubt, even so shall thy faith grow clear, O Pingiya—thou shalt reach the haven of rest."

Buddhism has gained a hold over a third of mankind because of its moral beauty. Over and over again, a clean heart and good conduct are enjoined, and when Vâsettha asks wherein a man's goodness consists, the Buddha replies:

"Herein, O Vâsettha, that putting away the murder of that which lives, he abstains from destroying life. Cudgel and sword he lays aside, and full of modesty and pity he is compassionate and kind to all creatures

that have life. This is the kind of goodness which he has.

"Putting away the theft of that which is not his, he abstains from anything not his due. He takes only what is his due, therewith is he content, and he passes his life in honesty. This is the kind of goodness which he has.

"Putting away slander and lying, he abstains from calumny. What he hears here he repeats not elsewhere, to raise a quarrel against the people here; what he hears elsewhere he repeats not here to raise a quarrel against the people there. Thus he lives, a binder-together of those who are divided, an encourager of those who are friends, a peacemaker, a lover of peace, a speaker of words that make for peace.

"Putting away bitterness of speech, he abstains from harsh language. Whatever word is kindly, pleasant to the ear, loving, reaching the heart—such are the words he speaks.

"Putting away foolish talk, he abstains from vain conversation. In season does he speak, he speaks fact, he utters good doctrine. He speaks that which redounds to profit, which is well-grounded, and full of wisdom. This is the kind of goodness which he has."

Such was the teaching that "gladdened and aroused the heart of Ambapâli, the courtesan. And when she heard that Buddha had arrived at her village, and was staying in her mango grove, she ordered magnificent carriages to be made ready, and drove with her waiting-women to the grove. And she paid homage to the Buddha, and respectfully invited him and the brethren to partake of some refreshment at her house on the following day. And Buddha, by silence, gave his consent.

"And he robed himself early in the morning, and went with the brethren to her dwelling-house. And she set sweet rice and cakes before her guests, and waited on them in person.

"When the meal was over, Ambapâli, the courtesan, had a stool brought, and sat down by Buddha's side, and addressed him in these words:

"'Lord, I present this building to the order of mendicants of which the Buddha is the head.'

"The gift was accepted, and after instructing and gladdening her heart with religious discourse, Buddha rose from his seat and departed thence."

Vihâras or Buddhist monasteries were, as a rule, not buildings, but caves dug into the rock. Mr Fergusson tells us that one of the Ajanta caves in Central India contains "sixteen cells for the accommodation of monks; there is a large assembly hall in the centre, a veranda in front, and a sanctuary in the back. Roof and pillars are ornamented with arabesque designs, and fresco paintings cover the walls entirely." Large numbers of vihâras have been found east of Benares, in modern *Behar*, *i.e.*, the *vihâr* or monastic country. The toranas or archways leading into the caves were frequently embellished with fine sculpture. Sacred history provided the artist with ample material. But the humour and pathos of life were too precious and real to be neglected by Buddhist genius. Dying soldiers amidst the rage of battle; triumphal entries with captured elephants and prisoners of war; pompous musicians in a scene of frolic, and light-stepped dancing-girls, their loose hair intertwined with lotuses and roses; drinking and gambling groups in city taverns; rustic swains making love to coy shepherdesses, and the hundred touches of humanity that never grow old as long as the heart is young, have found faithful

expression in the chiselled stone. But the wild fancies of Hindu art cannot compare with the perfect proportions of Greek sculpture, because decorative art, according to the same writer, was at all times restricted to the lower castes, while the intellectual classes of India, even to-day, look down upon manual labour with disdain.

When Buddha felt that his end was near, he called his disciples, and exhorted them to keep the dhamma or good law.

"Be earnest, brethren, holy, full of thought. Be steadfast in resolve, keep watch over your hearts; he that wearies not, but holds fast to truth and law, shall cross the river of life, shall make an end of grief."

And Ânanda went aside and wept.

If the criterion of religion is faith in a personal god, a Buddhist must be pronounced an atheist. But we believe that a righteous life is lived, not merely because of hope for heaven and fear of hell, but chiefly because goodness and truth lie deep in every human breast. Can we do better than think of God as infinite love and goodness? Buddhism inculcates moral earnestness on the ground that eternal love and wisdom cannot be clearly seen beneath the troubled waters, but

are pellucid when the lake of the mind is ruffled and agitated no longer by the storms of passion and vanity.

"When the sage, by earnestness, has driven vanity far away, the terraced heights of wisdom doth he climb, and free from care, looks down upon the care-worn crowd, as he who stands upon a mountain top looks down serene on toilers in the plain."

XI

THE INSTITUTES OF MANU

In the literature of Germany, heroic poetry was followed by Catholic theology, but no sooner did Luther restore Christian worship to purer and simpler forms, than the fine systems of the Dominican monks were forgotten, and popular sentiment was carried away by the smoother current of poetical teaching. The homely morality of Hans Sachs, the cobbler of Nuremberg, whose songs are sweet and fresh as the flowers in

the field after a spring shower, was greeted with enthusiasm in every German home.[1] Similarly, the Hindus got tired of the compact sûtras which were so hard to understand, and the rules and precepts, that are known as the Institutes of Manu, found a cordial welcome in India after Buddha's reformation. They are not a guide for lawyers such as may be seen in a solicitor's office, but moral and legal obligations happily blended and written in easy verse. In the original texts, Manu depicted life as he saw it, or wished to see it, on the shores of the Ganges, some hundred years before Christ. The revised version, in which his code has been preserved, is of a much later date, and belongs to the time when the Buddhist supremacy was passing away. But the ordinances themselves are based on ancient usages which prevailed in the earliest Hindu settlements.

The Vedic household did not consist of parents and children only, but was a large family gathering, governed by patriarchal laws. Uncles and nephews, cousins and other kin, lodged under the same hospitable

[1] Sachs (pronounce *zax*) was quite a young man when Luther began to translate the Bible into German.

roof. They had a joint-interest in the heritage, and worshipped the same tutelary gods, the trusted guardians of the hearth and plough. Implicit obedience to the *dam*pati or *dom*estic chief drew the bonds of blood still closer. In the wars of pagan England, the boar-crested helmet of the dampati glittered amidst the ashen shafts and linden shields of his loving kinsmen. The Saxon as well as the Vedic host marched into battle, drawn up in families and clans.[1] Within the shelter of the clan all men were freemen because they shared all things in common. But the spirit of clannish independence was narrow and full of jealousy. Freedom could not burst into wider bounds, and rest securely on the nation's will, under the paternal government of the Hindu dampati. At his death, the eldest son succeeded to the management of the estate, and the supreme control of the joint-household. If the younger brothers chose to separate, and set up house for themselves, they were welcome to do so, and Manu gives full

[1] The suffix "ing" is characteristic of English clan names, *e.g.*, the Readings who settled in Berkshire, or the Farings who planted their freeholds on the *down*s of Farring*don*.

directions as to the fair partition of the patrimony.[1]

A cluster of Indian homesteads in the same vicinity was called a vish or village; the head of the village community being the vishpati (district elder). Again, a group of villages was under the jurisdiction of a râja or chieftain who directed the public affairs.[2]

[1] The first-born heir, however, took the lion's share; he was lord of the manor. The old English aristocracy entailed the broad lands which they owned by right of conquest. It was a precautionary measure lest the family property, at any time, by bequest or sale, might pass into other hands. The co-heirs had to content themselves with the tenure of a farm held of their eldest brother. Some became so impoverished that they could not even afford to keep a servant, but grazed and milked their few cows themselves. The people, half in scorn and half in pity, called such ill-provided gentlemen *bache*lors, *i.e.*, cowmen, from the French word vache (cow). The name was then transferred to poor fellows who cannot afford to marry. But the national household of old had small accommodation for celibates. Husbandmen were expected to be husbands, and raise a son and heir. In Ancient India, no unmarried man, unless he was a yogi who had renounced the world, was much thought of either in society or in the Senate. Of course, it was quite out of the question that a bachelor could be a dampati—the patron and protector of a home. Dam*pati* = *pat*er of a family.

[2] *Rája* = Latin *rex*, *i.e.*, di*rect*or.

The revenue of the râja was derived from a substantial tithe which the vaishyas or villagers allowed him on the produce of their land, and the sales of merchandise and cattle. The law book lays down minutely the various regal functions. On a whole, they coincide with those of the housefather, but on a larger scale. The chieftain and dampati were both absolute rulers in their respective domains. The parent's authority at home expanded into the autocracy of the throne. The argument could easily be pushed further, since in every constitutional monarchy despots and autocrats have been the forerunners of representative forms of government. There is not a single aspect of national life without a domestic subsoil. Townships have grown out of homesteads, and kingship is but an extension of kinship.[1]

[1] The very words king and queen once meant father and mother. The idea embedded in the word *pat*er is *pot*ent, paternity or fatherhood being the expression of manly vigour and sexual strength. Potentate is another derivative of *pot*ent, *i.e.*, *pat*i in Sanskrit. Pati has become quite an international term. In Hindustan, landed proprietors are called kshetrapatis. In Iran, *kshetrap*ati was shortened to *satrap*, and came to mean Governor of a province. The kshetrapatis of

On the modern family tree, the sapling-branches no sooner ripen into manhood and womanhood than, as a rule, they are cut off and transplanted to a new home. But affinity of blood had a firmer grip on the primitive household, although hatred and revenge often bred civil strife if a division did occur.[1] In the Indo-European homeland,

India organised themselves into a Land Defence or Kshatriya League, and the ruling *ksha*triya of Persia is the *Shah*. The Ottoman Provinces are governed by Turkish Pashas, *i.e.*, Pati-Shahs; the Sultan himself is styled Padishah or Lord-Governor. Again, des*pot* is connected with dam*pati*, the parent-ruler of the Hindu home. The dampati of the Capulet household, indeed, dealt more like a despot than a father with Lady Juliet.

Each Saxon settlement was fenced with a *ton* or hedge; the word is still used in Germany where *zaun* denotes a fence. The neatly-tonned domiciles of the Harlings and Watlings grew into the *town*ships of Harling*ton* and Watling*ton*. The *hom*estead of the Billings became the *ham*let of Billing*ham*, and the cities of Nottingham and Birmingham, no doubt, are similar developments of joint-family estates.

[1] In the days gone by, kinship embraced the father's side only, and a clansman looked on his wife's relations as outsiders rather than kinsfolk. The Aryan bride, after leaving her parents and the old home, did not reside with her husband in a house of their own, but they dwelled together with his people in the family establishment where he was bred and born.

it was quite a common occurrence that strife between two herdsmen plunged a whole clan in bloodshed and vendetta. The Kauravas and Pândavas, two mighty scions of one lofty stem, did not scruple to shed each other's blood at Kurukshetra. Their forbears came from the Punjab where a confederacy with nine other patrician houses gave them a leading position. But the ten allies were defeated in a decisive battle by King Râma's gallant sires who won immortal fame in Vedic warfare and sacred minstrelsy.

In the Epic Age, the heroic Kurus, then resident in the Gangetic Valley, had long recovered their national prestige. The Panchâlas, five noble off-shoots of an ancient seed, were their rivals and neighbours on the south-eastern border.[1] The Kurus, after gaining a victory over them, fraternised, and even formed a new league with the vanquished foe. The united warbands of the Kuru-Panchâlas swept the once-victorious Koshalas down the great river into the land of Oudh where fresh laurels awaited the glorious race of Râma. The friendship of the Kurus and Panchâlas was strengthened

[1] Panchâlas means the Five Boroughs if the name is correctly derived from pancha, the Sanskrit word for five.

by intermarriage between their royal houses. Prince Arjun wedded Lady Draupadi, who kept house for the five brothers in the Jungle. Pându's and Dhritarâshtra's hostile sons represent powerful tribal families, organised like the vast pastoral households of early Israel, but more stationary, less nomadic.[1]

Manu enumerates, at great length, how the daily life of the Sovereign is to be spent, and what principles should govern his actions. Never to recede from combat, to protect his subjects, and pay due honour to the priestly caste, is the highest duty of a king. He should act as a father to his people, and they should love and cherish him, and never treat him lightly. For a king is not an ordinary mortal, proceeds the code, but a powerful divinity who appears in a human shape.[2] In his valour dwells

[1] Joint-households of lesser dimensions, and without a common ancestry, were the Montagues and Capulets of mediæval Verona. The fatal loins of these two hereditary foes gave life to a pair of star-crossed lovers who, with their tragic death, buried the unhappy family feud.

[2] The same idea prevailed among the Anglo-Saxons. Their early kings claimed divine descent from Wodan, chief god of the Teutons.

conquest, and death in his wrath. It is by royal favour that abundance spreads her wings. Knowing that law is grounded on immemorial custom, let the râja preserve every good usage which is well established. In the administration of justice, he is to be assisted by a court of learned Brahmins, who must have a thorough knowledge of the civil and penal statutes, and loyally uphold the national institutions which the gods ordained.[1]

The whole body of unwritten tradition was codified, in divers places and sundry digests, by the Brahmin-jurists who made the new enactments subservient, in the first place, to sacerdotal interests. Thus, various schools of law sprung up, all propounding their own principles of jurisprudence. The priest-judges who wove the texture of their learning round Manu's venerable name were final winners in the legal contest, and left all rival teachers far behind. Unto the present day, Hindu lawyers acknowledge Manu as their foremost authority. This rare success was largely due to the excellence

[1] The Gaelic conception of the duties of a righ or chieftain, and the Indian notion of an ideal râj were equally lofty. See PAGAN IRELAND, pp. 46-50.

of the code, but no less to its staunch conservatism. The ordinances of Manu embody the customary laws which had been handed down from Vedic antiquity, and at the same time reflect the social life of later days which too have long passed into history.[1]

The conditions of society are often measured by the position that woman holds in it. Hindu matrons seem to have enjoyed much respect and domestic influence at Manu's time.[2] The seclusion of women in zenanas is no Hindu custom at all, but was introduced in India after the Mohammedan Conquest, about the time when the Plantagenets rose to power in England. Slave trade was known among the ancient Hindus quite as much as among the classical nations of Europe. Manu states that money-lenders were entitled to charge fifteen per cent.

[1] *Man*u was not an individual lawgiver like Moses, but the name is symbolical and signifies *min*d (*man*as in Sanskrit, *men*s in Latin). Rational creatures are called *men* and wo*men* because of their *men*tal capacities; the dumb brutes cannot reason. Law and order are the offspring of the human mind, hence Manu is regarded by the Hindus as the father of Indian law, and the progenitor of mankind.

[2] "Where woman is honoured there is joy in heaven, where she is despised religious acts become fruitless."

annual interest on secured loans, and that slave-girls passed as security.[1]

But we are not so much concerned with actual law as with national ideals, and it will be more apposite to say something about Manu's ethical code.

Manu praises humility as the great teacher in life—

> "From poison thou may'st take the food of life,
> The purest gold from lumps of impure earth,
> Examples of good conduct from a child,
> Something from all—from men of low degree
> Lessons of wisdom if thou humble be."

It is better for the heart to be reviled than exalted—

> "Shrink thou from worldly honour as from poison,
> Seek rather scorn; the scorned may sleep in peace,
> In peace awake; the scorner perishes."

Faith in God is an efficient talisman against sin—

> "He who with faith unshaken sees himself
> And all things in the Universal Soul
> Cannot apply his mind to wickedness."

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[1] The price of a slave-woman was fixed by law at so many cows or head of horned cattle. Similar conditions existed in Ancient Ireland; the Gaelic word "cumal" denoting either a female slave or three milch-cows.

Future suffering for vice and folly is held up by the lawgiver as an incentive to a virtuous life—

"Those who repeat their vicious acts are doomed
To misery increasing more and more
In forms becoming more and more debased.

. . . . . .

"Just in proportion as immortal soul
Addicts itself to sensuality,
In that degree the senses shall become
Intensely keen in future wanderings."[1]

XII

LATER PHASES OF BUDDHISM

The Emperor Ashoka, who was a grandson of Chandragupta, had edicts engraven on rocks and pillars all over India. Numerous inscriptions have been discovered which form a valuable chronicle of the time. They give an account of Ashoka's conquest of Bengal; of Buddhist mission stations established in Egypt, Syria, and Greece; of hospitals and medical aid provided for man and beast.

[1] The above translations are by Sir Monier-Williams.

One stone has a sermon on the beauty of holiness, another declares that religion is not dogma, but mercy, charity, and truth. Tolerance to all sects, kindness to animals, and other moral precepts are enjoined on these venerable monuments of more than two thousand years' standing. But Ashoka was a powerful ruler as well as an earnest Buddhist. He consolidated and enlarged his grandfather's empire until it reached from the Bay of Bengal to the Hindu Kush Mountains; even some of the Dekhan tribes acknowledged his over-lordship.

India was then, as it is now, a conglomeration of races, and counted far more foreigners than Hindus. Ashoka's religious zeal and ripe statesmanship helped to establish a creed which, at no time, made the slightest distinction between Aryan and barbarian. The tendency of Buddhism to fall in with popular notions did the rest. But it was a fatal policy to court the illiterate masses and adapt the ceremonial to their craving for outward show. The politic condescension was dearly paid for in the end when the indulged populace dragged religion down into idle pomp and image worship.

We have a graphic description of a Buddhist

festival from the pen of a Chinese pilgrim who visited India in the seventh century of our era. The downfall of Magadha had long been followed by the ascendency of Kanouj, once the classical ground of the Kurus and Panchâlas. When Hiouen Thsang—that is the name of the distinguished traveller—arrived at the Court of Kanouj, King Harsha was celebrating the consecration of an image of Buddha. The Râja had with him his friend and ally of Assam, and twenty feudal Princes of Hindustan were also present to take part in the ceremony. The ever-increasing number of sightseers found accommodation on huge stands and under spreading trees which lined the processional route. Striped canvas marquees were gaily decked with waving flags and silken banners, and coloured lamps were disposed about the music kiosks to be lit up at nightfall. Kashmir carpets into which fantastic designs of birds and plants had been skilfully worked, were spread all the way from the royal palace to a shrine where relics of the Buddha and of canonised saints were deposited. Blowers of bugle-horns and beaters of cymbals opened the *cortège*. Next came the state coaches, old-fashioned and quaintly ornamented with gilt figures of Hindu gods.

The Court officials who occupied them were attired in finest Benares muslin and shimmering brocade, their turbans and sword handles being studded with jewels. A train of youthful pages clad in silver-stitched garments bore dainty cups and lavers for holy use. Caged lions and panthers excited wild cries of admiration from the gazing crowd. Singing-birds of bright plumage were perched on flower-woven chains, and outlandish slaves in dazzling white and flaming purple carried the graceful curves at equal distances. Tender-aged bayaderes, with jingling tambourines and chiming anklets, moved their supple limbs to a soft, light tune. A detachment of the Royal Bodyguard escorted a richly-caparisoned elephant; its saddle-cloth was fringed with silver bells, and embroidered with mystic signs. On the animal's back reposed, on a lovely lotus throne, a golden image of Buddha, the object of the celebration. The posture of the figure was cross-legged, in yogi fashion, and the sacred head was crowned with a diadem of flashing sapphires and chaste emeralds—emblem of a celestial aureole. Four acolytes held over it a canopy of roses and long-stalked water-lilies, and four others sprinkled fragrant essences, and scattered

fresh-cut blossoms. Close behind followed the royal chariot drawn by six fiery steeds, the postillions wearing scarlet livery.

King Harsha and the Râja of Assam were covered with a blaze of diamonds, and as they passed, the people cheered lustily. Five hundred picked elephants arrayed in gaudy trappings were led by grooms, and a squadron formed of the noblest kshatriyas closed the procession.

When all came to a standstill, the music ceased playing, and a hush ran through the expectant multitude. A youth holding a golden salver in his hand approached the Mahâ-Râja, and, on bended knee, presented a costly vessel filled with water from the sacred River Ganges. A daïs erected for the Emperor-King had been decorated with beautiful palms and tasteful draperies, and darbha (sacrificial grass) was strewn on the carpeted floor. The Priest-Cardinal, making a low obeisance, then handed His Majesty the effigy of Buddha. The monarch reverentially kissed the image of his Lord, bathed it in the holy water, and placed choice flowers and luscious fruit before it, while the Court chaplains, in their flowing yellow robes, moved round in measured step, swinging sweet incense and chanting holy

mantras. And the vast assemblage joined in worship according to Buddhist rites.

When divine service was over, the populace dispersed to spend the rest of the day in mirth and revelry. King Harsha gave a splendid banquet to which he invited all ecclesiastical dignitaries of Kanouj—both Buddhists and Brahmins. Learned discussions closed the day.[1]

Such gorgeous pageants as the one we have described, are sure to appeal to every sense and emotion, and have probably made more converts to Buddhism than all its ethics and metaphysics. We are not without a parallel in Europe. An Italian inn-keeper, or a Spanish peasant-girl will, as a rule, feel more attracted to Christianity by the jests and carousals of the carnival, choral processions,

[1] To make our point clear we have taken the liberty to paraphrase and intermingle the interesting accounts of Indian life given by Megasthenes and Hiouen Thsang, although the two distinguished writers are separated by the interval of a thousand years. It was in the days of the early Sangha that Megasthenes was Greek Ambassador at Chandragupta's Court in Patna, then the very centre of Buddhist activity, while Hiouen Thsang, a learned friar from the Far East, paid a visit to the Holy Land of Buddhism at the time of its decadence on native soil.

and miracle-working relics, than by the Sermon on the Mount or the Epistles of St Paul. Buddha repudiated all spectacular scenes in the service of religion. His reformation was a bold attempt to disentangle the spirit of self-sacrifice from complicated rites and sacrificial offerings made to imaginary gods. But the church which was raised in his holy name counts many followers who almost make a god of the great reformer himself, and the Buddhist ritual prescribed by the ecclesiastical government of the Lamas for the faithful observance of the Tibetans, eclipses even the dictatorial tone of the Brahminic hierarchy. Confession of sins, though not practised by the laity, was known to the brethren of the early Sangha. But the Buddhist monks do not now go to confession. A contrite heart, they reason, is the best confessional, and the small voice of the conscience is a never-failing monitor if repentance be sincere. The argument seems sound enough. Self-abasement is a wholesome corrective, and father-confessors, no doubt, are honourable and saintly men, but implicit reliance on their counsel and directions means dependence on human authority, which is but shifting sand, and in many cases implies fear of disregarding

it. Dependence and fear, however, unless God be their object, are incompatible with liberty of conscience, sweetest of gifts divine. Is it not the innate spirit of fearlessness, and the long national struggle for free institutions that have raised the Anglo-Saxon race to the first civilising power on earth, mother of prosperous commonwealths? and is it not the same love of independent search after truth which has made Germany a nursery of philosophy and science, the educational centre of the world? For similar reasons, the Vedânta school of religion has matured deeper thinkers and riper thoughts than Buddhism.[1]

Orthodox Hindus, living in the midst of the elaborate ceremonial and the never-ending holidays of the Buddhists, imperceptibly

[1] The members of the Sangha look upon the established Order as their refuge and strength, but the teachings of Vedânta advocate universal brotherhood rather than an organised fellowship. The fruits of the spirit, such is the Vedântic point of view, cannot be forced by rules and regulations, but grow out of gnâna (self-realisation). The âtma-knower who knows himself in all things, and all things in himself, has no need of a communal life or common forms of worship in order to commune with brother-souls, and help them on to moksha (salvation).

adopted these popular features, one after the other; they could not help doing so, no more than an Englishman who resides in Paris can help falling in with French ways and manners. Five hundred years after Christ, the religion of the Brahmins or Hinduism, as it came to be called, was a strange mixture of the old Vedic faith and Buddhist forms of worship. The Vedic clansmen had never sacrificed in public, but only privately, when the heart prompted them, on their domestic altars.

As Hinduism developed and became predominant at last, magnificent places of public worship sprung up everywhere, and quite equalled those of the Buddhists in splendour. Numbers of Hindu pagodas were built in the eastern counties, especially in Orissa, between A.D. 500 and 700, and the gigantic caves of Ellora, north-east of Bombay, were transformed into temples during the two subsequent centuries. But Vedic India knew neither temples nor idolatry. The old Âryas hymned the pure elements, earth and sun and water, the ever-lasting works which proclaim the might of the Creator. What the earth produced and the sun made grow, more particularly wheat and barley, was

eagerly cultivated; tillage and irrigation were believed to please the Devas, while it was thought an act of desecration to pollute the rivers, or the produce of the garden and the field. But modern Hinduism dethroned the Vedic pantheon, put new deities in its place, and made images of them. Pilgrimages to shrines and relic worship came in vogue among orthodox Hindus even more than among the Buddhists. Statuettes of gods were carried at gorgeous processions, which very soon outshone the pageantry of the rival faith.

At last, Buddhism was superseded by Hinduism, and had to go. In the fifth century, A.D., popular sentiment began to turn the scale in favour of Hinduism, and in the eleventh, the Rajputs were masters of India. They crushed Buddhism and spread Hinduism wherever they went. Vihâras were pulled down, rare manuscripts ruthlessly burned, monks were driven out of the land, and Buddhist chapels converted into Hindu sanctuaries. The brave but cruel Rajputs were vanquished in their turn by Mohammedan invaders, though only after a long and fierce struggle. The Moslems, hating every religion which was not Islam, demolished all

temples and idols that lay in their way. Hinduism tottered to its very foundations, and Buddhism in India received its death blow. Some hundred years after the migration of Christianity from Syria to the various countries of Europe, Buddhism too left India, and struck root in other lands, north and south and east, and became the light of Asia, even as Christianity has become the light of the world.[1]

XIII

THE HUNS AND THE RISE OF UJAIN

When modern Europe first formed itself into nations, the extensive prairies in the south of Russia, once the seats of Scythian tribes, were overrun by the Huns. They were migratory hordes living chiefly on rapine and plunder. About the fourth century, A.D., the Huns crossed the River Volga and proceeded further west. They laid populous country districts waste, looted the farms, and set prosperous

[1] When the first crusaders set out for the reconquest of the Holy Land, Buddhism was almost extinct in India, Kashmir being one of its last strongholds.

cities ablaze. Their destructive course lay through the orchard groves along the Black Sea, and across the rose gardens of Roumania. They journeyed up the Danube to the south of Hungary, and it was in one of their nomadic stations on the banks of the River Theiss that Attila was born, or Etzel as he is named in the Nibelung Song. He led the Huns to glorious victories, and was dreaded in Europe no less than the first Napoleon—a kindred spirit. Blood and fire marked Attila's course through Bavaria and the fair Rhinelands, but when the Huns came to the vineyards of Champagne, the Teutonic tribes roused themselves and united their forces near Paris. In the valley of the Marne, the barbarians were defied and defeated. The plains of Chalons were a battlefield of nations, A.D. 451, and shaped the destinies of Europe as much as the heights of Waterloo did in 1815.

But long before the Huns swept over Europe, vast numbers of them had been wandering over the bleak flats of Turkestan, and had entered Persia. They brought terror and ruin to the peaceful villages of Khorassan, and many native families fled before the violent intruder across the Afghan

Highlands to India. The hospitable inhabitants of the Punjab, Rajputana, and Oudh offered shelter and protection to the needy refugees. One noble emigrant family, the Guptas,[1] settled in Kanouj, and gained such wealth and influence that it was not long before they became the ruling family of the town. In the fifth century, when Magadha declined, the Guptas raised Kanouj to the first city in Hindustan. But, after a few generations of lordship, they were unable to resist the Hunnish wave any longer; it broke over Kanouj and made a sudden end of the Gupta dynasty.

The spirited Vallabhis, a Hindu tribe in Gujarat, then became powerful, and their blood flowed in the veins of Vikrama the Great, the most distinguished name of the Vikrama dynasty. His capital was Ujain, in Malva, where he reigned in the first half of the sixth century. Like General Aëtius at Chalons, Vikrama stemmed the tide of the advancing Huns, and routed their hordes. But, more appropriately, we may place the Râja by the side of the genial Karl August, Duke of Weimar. Both Princes were enlightened patrons of science and art, and their respective Courts were graced by the

[1] Gupta means "protected, concealed," in Sanskrit.

presence of India's and Germany's most illustrious poets. Vikrama's friend was Kâlidâsa, the famous author of Shakuntala. His genius much resembles that of Goethe, the *protégé* of Karl August, although the mental range of Kâlidâsa is less comprehensive—a deficit for which not the poet but the time in which he lived should be debited. Vikrama's age was rich in thought, but knowledge was far advanced in the age of Frederick and Goethe.

Under the Guptas and Vikramas, Hinduism and Buddhism kept good friends. Buddhists frequented the universities of the Brahmins, and young Hindus of orthodox families gladly pursued their studies in the vihâra-colleges of India. Vikrama the Great inclined to Hinduism, and we have seen that Harsha, one of his successors, was a devout Buddhist. King Harsha, who died about A.D. 650, removed the capital to Kanouj again, and Ujain decayed. Parks and gardens look deserted, temples and palaces lie in ruins—

> "Her lofty towers are fallen; creepers grow
> O'er marble dome and shattered portico."
> —(Kâlidâsa).[1]

[1] The two lines which we apply to Ujain were really intended for Oudh by the Indian poet who did not live to see Ujain decay.

In a later age, the Vallabhis were subjugated by the Rajputs who annexed Malva. King Bhoja, a contemporary of William the Conqueror, tried to revive the literary glory of Ujain. Dhâra, on the north-western slopes of the Vindhyas, became the new capital of Central India.

XIV

PURÂNAS AND TANTRAS

The Scriptures of modern Hinduism are the Purânas which were first committed to writing about the sixth century of our era. The Hindus have always been lovers of stories about the gods. The ancient myths were handed down from father to son, and poets largely added to the stock from the stores of their own imagination. Antiquaries and divines took great pains to preserve this ocean of folklore. They set to work very much in the same fashion as Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. The two brothers went about the country, and collected ancient legends among the German peasantry. Many an aged grandam was asked to repeat over the spinning-wheel some of the elf- and fairy-

tales which she had heard in the nursery sixty years ago.

Generations of Brahmins must have been busy compiling and arranging, curtailing and enlarging the Purânas which were recast time after time until they came out in that encyclopedic form in which we possess them now. The Purânas have interesting information on almost every topic. There are lengthy accounts of the lives of gods and patriarchs, stories of the creation, sacred as well as profane history. Psalms and prophecies stand peacefully by the side of geological teaching; anatomy is taught together with music, theories about the movement of the stars are strangely intermixed with lessons on grammar. But long-winded as the Purânas are they are grand old books, comparable to a fine old man who is excellent company when he fondly rambles over the various events and experiences of his chequered life.[1]

[1] However different the character of the Purânas and Eddas may be, their mythological features bear a strong family likeness which, no doubt, can be traced back to a common Aryan parentage. Both names imply the idea of antiquity. *Pur*ânas are traditions of *for*mer times, and edda signifies "grannie" in the Norse tongue. The venerable legends of Norway are still known as "Grandmother's Tales" among the people of Iceland.

The Purânic gods are Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. At first Brahma meant no more than prayer which "breaks forth" from the abundance of the heart. In the Vedic hymns, Brahma is the God who inclines the heart to prayer. Priests were called Brahmins because it was their duty to regulate the Common Prayer and fix the words. In a more advanced age, when thought grew subtle, Brahma came to mean the infinite Godhead from whom Nature proceeds, in whom all things have their being, and to whom life returns in the end. Brahma sûtras were not mere prayer-books, but philosophical enquiries about God.[1] Hinduism has retained all these

Edda is an old Aryan pet name, generally applied by children to their elders. The corresponding term in English is *dadda*, and in Sanskrit *tâta*, which, however, means daddie as well as sonnie.

[1] Brahma is derived from the root *brih*, *i.e.*, to break forth. Kindred words are Irish *bricht* (magic), and Old Norse *bragr* (poetry). The lips inspired by genius break forth in prophecy and song. In the imagination of the Aryan sires, prayers and incantations were an outburst of holy rapture—an overflow of the spirit's rushing waves.

Not only the Hindus, but also the Gaels and Vikings have deified the ancient root. St *Brig*it is the Irish goddess of wisdom, her Norwegian namesake being Bragr, the god of saga-lore and minstrelsy.

ideas. Creation, preservation, and dissolution are believed to be the eternal functions of the Godhead. God the Creator is called Brahma in the Purânas.

Vishnu, once a name of the invigorating sun, is the second person of the Hindu Trinity, the sustainer and protector of the universe. He represents the life force incarnate in ten avatârs or saviours of whom Râma, the destroyer of evil (Râvana), and Krishna, the wise counsellor of Arjun, are the two most revered.[1] Last of all, Shiva, an old Vedic appellation of the dreaded thundercloud which works destruction, but at the same time purifies the air and revives Nature, has become the presiding deity of death and resurrection.

The creation of the world is a thing of the past, and accomplished facts do not particularly arouse the interest of the masses. That is the reason why the worship of Brahma has fallen into disuse in India. Few Brahma temples survive; the best-known is near Ajmere in Rajputana. The cult of Shiva, on the other hand, enjoys great popularity, the

[1] Latin *ab* (from) corresponds to Sanskrit *ava*, and *trans* (beyond) to *târ*. Avatâr means "from beyond" the skies, heaven-descended.

fear of death and hope of resurrection lying nearer to the human heart than the origin of species. Shiva is mated to the benignant goddess Sati who typifies the renewal of Nature in spring. In a beautiful myth, Sati sacrifices herself in a blazing fire (the summer sun), but in Uma's lovely shape the goddess is reborn

> "where sloping to the skies
> Himâlaya in sullen grandeur lies."

Uma, the maid of the mountains, is symbolical of Shiva's reproductive power, while the destructive aspect of the God is personified in the terrible goddess Kâli, described in the Purânas as "armed with noose and scimitar, and wearing a garland of skeletons. Her face looks old and withered, with lolling tongue and bloodshot eyes." The worshippers of Kâli are the Tantrists who acknowledge the Tantras as their scriptural authority.

The Tantras exhibit a much later and more effete stage of religious thought than the Purânas, and are largely concerned with investigations into spiritualism. They are written in the form of dialogues, Shiva instructing Kâli by what practices psychic powers may be attained. Clairvoyance and telepathy,

hypnotic suggestion and spirit communication, and other feats of magic form the subject-matter of the Tantras.[1] But although the Tantrists seem to hanker after spirits rather than spirit, many a noble soul may be found among them worshipping the Impersonal under the personality of Kâli. Such a one was Râmakrishna Paramahansa, a fervent Hindu saint

[1] Magic has been defined as conscious control over Nature's finer forces. St Paul held that "natural man" if he be gifted that way will search the hidden mysteries of Nature, but that by magic alone he cannot receive the deep things of the spirit. At all times, the forbidden arts have been eagerly practised. Ages before Moses, the priesthood in the valley of the Nile fortified their initiate kings by the use of magic, and the ancient wisdom of Israel was derived from Egyptian magicians. But in spite of incantations and necromancy, the heart of Pharaoh was hardened by the Lord, and the Hebrews degenerated to a carnally-minded people. Christ's supreme contempt of name and fame and money angered the Jews, because their leading motives were lust of gold and worldly honours, and his defiance of the Mosaic law exasperated the Scribes and Pharisees who knew no higher law. If his followers had believed in him without being shown signs and wonders, Jesus would not have taken the trouble to rebuke the wind and waters, or curse a fig-tree so that it presently withered away. His godlike soul must have rebelled against an evil and adulterous generation which sought after petty signs.

and Tantrist. To him the goddess was a mere suggestion of the Divine Substance, and he knew full well that images of stone are, at best, feeble representations compared to the soul's majesty, image of God. Râmakrishna looked on Kâli as his Divine Mother, and the charm which he found in holy communion with her proved more potent than all the spells of mysterymongers.

"When you cannot avoid entering places where there may be temptations, always carry with you the thought of your Divine Mother. She is sure to protect you from the many evils that may be lurking even in your heart. Cannot the presence of your own mother shame you away from evil thoughts and evil deeds?"[1]

The saint died near Calcutta in 1886, and so broad and universal were his religious views that they have been largely accepted, not only in India, but also in England and America. Râmakrishnaists hold "that the precepts of Jesus and Buddha, Vedânta and Avesta, do not disagree, but are identical in spirit because they have all sprung from realisation of Divine Sonship, eternal fountain

[1] Quoted from Max Müller who has edited some of the splendid SAYINGS OF RÂMAKRISHNA PARAMAHANSA.

of life and light. God sends his teachers into every age and clime. Religious differences touch only the dry husk of ritual and dogma, but the sweet kernel of religion is far beyond the reach of vain disputes." The Paramahansa himself worshipped promiscuously in Christian Church and Mosque, Kâli pagoda and Buddhist temple and, best of all, in the sanctuary of his loving heart. Râmakrishna has much in common with Schopenhauer, but his genius moves, so to speak, on a higher plane, for he was a born spiritual leader of men, while the great German was but an intellectual giant.[1]

Parama is the same word as su*preme*, and parama-hansa refers to the king of the hansas or feathered tribes. The eagle's majestic flight is an appropriate symbol for keen vision and lofty aspiration pursuing its heavenward course on the strong wings of faith. St John, too, has been called the soaring eagle, the Paramahansa of the Christian Church. The original meaning of *hans*a was bird, but became specialised to "swan" in Sanskrit, and to "goose" in Latin

[1] Râmakrishna's most gifted follower was the brilliant Vivekânanda, who lectured before appreciative audiences in London and New York.

(*hanser* or anser). The homeless and migratory life of the "swans of holiness" is sketched in the short, but interesting PARAMAHANSA UPANISHAD.

The healthful Veda has been superseded by the senile Purânas and Tantras; but signs are not wanting that the number of those who cling to the pure and simple faith of Vedânta is increasing and slowly raising the social and national level of India, which has undergone so many violent fluctuations in the past.

XV

HINDU LEGENDS AND FESTIVALS

SHIVA'S exterior as poets have drawn it is almost as repellent as that of his consort Kâli. His hair is plaited after the style of Hindu ascetics, but on nearer sight it is a braid of wriggling snakes. A chaplet of skulls hangs round his neck, and in the centre of his forehead flames a single eye arched by the silver crescent of the moon.

"He stands with arms outstretched on high,
Between five fires which blaze all day,
Four toward the quarters of the sky,
O'erhead the sun's meridian ray.

"In fiercest frost on snow he sleeps,
Dry leaves and herbs his only food,
Mid pouring rain Shiva his vigil keeps,
His soul serene, his senses all subdued."

Wrapt in deep meditation the stern god is fabled to reside on a lonely peak of the snow-capped Himâlayas, the mountain home of Ganga. The sacred stream, in her descent from heaven, first fell on Shiva's head according to a Sanskrit legend which has been beautifully rendered in English verse [1]—

"On Shiva's head descending first
A rest the torrents found,
Then down in all their might they burst
And roared along the ground.

"On thousand glittering scales the beam
Of rosy morn was flashing,
Turtles and dolphins down the stream
And swarms of fish came dashing.

"Then bards who chant celestial lays
And nymphs of heavenly birth
Flocked round upon that flood to gaze
That streamed from sky to earth.

---

[1] By Ralph Griffith. The translation of the preceding verses is by Dean Milman.

"The gods themselves, from every sphere,
Incomparably bright,
Borne in their golden cars drew near
To see the wondrous sight.

"The cloudless azure was aflame
With the light of a hundred suns,
Where'er the shining chariots came
That bore those holy ones.

"And white foam clouds and silver spray
Were wildly tossed on high,
Like swans that urge their homeward way
Across the autumn sky."

Sati's father was the patriarch Daksha, who could not bear the sight of his ungainly son-in-law. Once he performed a solemn sacrifice to which all the gods except Shiva were invited. So keenly did Sati feel the affront that, in her shame, she threw herself into the sacrificial fire. Then anger rose in Shiva's breast, and he created giants of superhuman strength, who struck Daksha's head off and ill-treated the invited guests. When his wrath was appeased, he restored the patriarch to life again, but gave him a ram's head as a lifelong remembrance. The scuffle at Daksha's sacrifice is sculptured on the walls of the excavated temples at Ellora.

Sati or "True" is quite a favourite name

with Hindu women, who look on Daksha's daughter as the perfect type of a matron true to her husband even unto death. A wife's self-sacrifice came to be called sati, or, in English spelling, suttee. The cruel custom of suttee (burning of widows) prevailed amongst all primitive Aryan tribes, and was not abolished in India until the British era.[1]

While the cult of Shiva predominates in the priestly caste, Krishna is more popular among the lower classes, especially in the Bengal Presidency. His life is told fully in the Bhâgavata Purâna, the holiest book of the Krishnaists. The Bhâgavata was composed in the Middle Ages when the Moslems were rulers of India, long after the downfall of the Guptas and Rajputs.[2]

[1] Derived from *sati* (true) is *satya* (truth). Satyakâma is the name given to the young student in the Chhândogya Upanishad because of his "love of truth." When the youth was asked about his parentage, he spoke the plain truth, although his heart bled as he had to acknowledge that he was a child of lawless love.

[2] Baga = "apportioning" good and ill; bakht = the "portion" dealt out to mortals in life's lottery. Destiny was called *bakht*, and the Deity *Baga* by the ancient Persians, whose religion survives among the Parsis. Their priesthood, the magi, were fatalists, and taught the doctrine of bagabakht (fate pre-ordained by Baga) or, as we should say, the dispensation of Divine Providence.

Krishna's father was Vasudeva who lived in Agra, and was married to Princess Devaki, a cousin of King Kansa. A prophecy that the Râja was to be slain by one of her children alarmed Kansa, and he gave orders to imprison the Princess, and to put her six sons to death. Krishna was born in prison, but Vasudeva contrived to conceal his birth before the King, and escape unnoticed with the new-born babe. He entered Vrindâvana Forest, somewhere in the North-Western Provinces, and favoured by the gods found the herdsman Nanda who promised to take care of the young child. Krishna grew up in the woods, joining in the games of his foster-brothers, and sporting with the gopis or shepherd-damsels. His favourite was

Bog, the Russian word for God, has sprung from the same hidden source of Aryan spirituality as Baga. Lovers of Bog are known as bhaktas in India. If the devotee has become self-oblivious—forgetting all else save the Beloved, that state of internal recollection is termed bhakti in Sanskrit. Bhagavat means baga-like or god-like, divine. The Bhâgavata Purâna is a biography of the "divine" Krishna, and the Bhagavad Gîta is the "Divine" Lay which the Avatâr recited on the battlefield of Kurukshetra for the benefit of Prince Arjun. Krishnaists must not be confounded with Râmakrishnaists or followers of Râmakrishna Paramahansa.

Râdha, the "jasmine-bosomed" maid. God Indra being jealous of the love she bore to Krishna, inundated the forest so that Râdha should perish. But the divinity of Vishnu became manifest in Krishna, and the divine shepherd-boy uplifted Govardhana Hill and the gopis on it, and thus saved his love from the violence of Indra. Krishna's next adventure was to slay Kansa, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet. After the tyrant's death, the Agra people were led by Krishna to Gujarat, where he built the city of Dwarka, and began a long and prosperous reign.

Janmâshtami or Krishna's nativity is annually kept as a general holiday among the Krishnaists. A large field tent is erected, and fairy lamps in ruby, green, and blue peep out of verdant boughs with which the inside walls are decorated. A bed of hay and moss is prepared on a raised platform; the image of the mother rests therein, the divine child at her bosom. Gods and genii are suspended above their heads. Vasudeva, sword in hand, stands erect by the side of the round-faced Nanda. Woodland fairies are dancing, choristers sing carols, and shepherds celebrate the happy delivery of

Devaki. Sweet sandal dust is strewn, incense is burned, and adoration paid to the holy family.

Krishna's natal day, which has possibly borrowed some of its joyous features from our Christmas festivities, is not only kept up with *tableaux vivants*, but mystery plays are performed suitable to the occasion. Theatrical companies make regular tours through Bengal and other provinces at Janmâshtami time. In one of these religious dramas Krishna appears as a hungry beggar, and a poor Brahmin generously offers him his own dinner, consisting of a plain dish of boiled rice. The little act of kindness is rewarded with abundant gifts on the god's part. Incidents of a similar nature taken from the life of Christ occur in the Passion Plays which are staged at Oberammergau. One of Goethe's dramatic poems narrates how Christ and St Peter once, on a very hot day, walked through the streets of Jerusalem. Peter saw a broken horseshoe lying on the ground and carelessly pushed it aside, but the Saviour stooped and took it up. A blacksmith whose door they passed offered a farthing for the piece of iron, and Jesus bought a handful of cherries for the money.

He dropped them, one by one, on the way, and each juicy berry was eagerly picked up by the thirsty disciple. Moral object lessons of the same kind are a well-known feature at the religious festivals of the Hindus.

The celebration of spring, in March, is likewise in honour of Krishna. Peasant-girls representing the gopis tread a gay measure on the village-green. Field sports are indulged in by the young men, and prizes distributed. The love passages between Krishna and Râdha are recited or sung to musical accompaniment, while the image of the lovers reposes amid flowers in a gently-moving swing.

The Râm-Lîla festival in the month of September is the great day for Râma worshippers. The nuptials of Râma and Sîta, the siege of Lanka, and the hero's safe return to Oudh, are the chief items of a pantomime which is performed in the open air. Dancing and fireworks add to the general effect of the spectacle. Dumbshows and ballet may be occasionally witnessed in the grounds of the Crystal Palace on an August Bank Holiday, and although they are more of a secular than a religious character, the thought naturally suggests itself that

human nature, however much its outward form and expression may vary, is everywhere the same.

. . . . .

We append some rambling thoughts on the origin of a few words, and myths, and customs which would have been inserted, in their proper place, as a footnote to Janmâshtami if they had not accumulated to undue proportions.

*Gen*esis (creation) is a Greek word, and *gen*ius, the "creative" power of the mind, is Latin. The classical root *gen* and its English equivalent *kin* express the idea of production and origin. Pro*gen*y and *kin*dred is issue of a common "origin." Moss- and tea-roses are two different *kin*ds (productions) of roses, but belong to the same *gen*us (origin). Each descent from our first parents marks a new *gen*eration, *i.e.*, creation. *Gen*tle and *kin*d signifies "like a *kin*sman"; *gen*erous and *gen*uine belong to the same genus of words. *Gen*tes, in old Latin, meant kinsmen or clansmen, and Roman citizens, sons of the Empire, applied the word to the clans beyond the Alps and sea, Teutons and Greeks, and other foreigners. The Latin-speaking Jews who drew a sharp distinction

between the chosen people and strangers to their faith, adopted the term, and looked on everybody that was not a Hebrew as a *gen*tile.[1]

An East-Aryan reflection of *kin* and *gen* is the Sanskrit root *jan.* The philosopher on the throne of Videha was called *Jan*aka, *i.e.*, pro*gen*itor, because he was like a father to his people, genial and kindly, an ideal *king.* Janaka's daughter was Sîta, the heroine of the Râmâyana. Jana signifies the same as *gen*tes (people), and *jan*ma means parentage or birth.

Ashta in Sanskrit is identical with *eahta* in Anglo-Saxon, and *eight* in English. Ashtami is the eighth day of the month, and Janmâshtami (a contraction of janma-ashtami) bears reference to Krishna's birthday on the eighth of the Indian midsummer month, some time in August or September. The Latin for *asht*ami is *Oct*ober, the eighth month in the old Roman calendar. The French still write *8bre.* What fitter season could a pre-Christian people have chosen for

[1] The Israelites like the old Romans kept aloof as much as possible from the goyim or nations round about them. The word goyim frequently occurs in the Old Testament, and "gentile" is really a translation of the Hebrew term through a Greek intermediary.

celebrating the anniversary of the New Year than the return of the first violet in March? Moreover, spring was the time when the ancient shepherd clans, more particularly the surplus population, used to leave the overcrowded pastures. Wise pontiffs, *i.e.*, bridge-builders and path-finders guided them safely across the broad streams of the prairie into fresh meadow tracts, each annual migration being the opening of a new chapter in the unchronicled history of the Aryan herdsmen.

Pontiff, the Latin pontifex, literally means a maker (-fex) of "roads and bridges."[1] The word *pont* carries us back to the dawn of Roman civilisation when Italy was still what her name implies, a land of vituli or calves. It was in the lambing season when the herbage is luxuriant that colonies of youthful swains went forth from the congested clan-land like swarms of bees that leave their native hives under the bee-queen's trusted leadership. Rude hurdle-ponts were spanned from bank to bank if the rivers could not

[1] The English word *path* has retained the primitive sense which the Roman wayfarers changed to "bridge," and the Greek voyagers to *pont*us, the highroad of the seas.

be forded, and roads were cut through a primeval wilderness, the pontifex directing and supervising the building operations. The virile wanderers dispersed over the Apennine Peninsula, and seized on the grassy plots like hungry wolves that fall upon their prey. The *ver*nal season has ever been *sacr*ed to pastoral bands. The legendary history of the Hirpini or Wolfings, and other ancient tribes, commenced with the *Ver Sacrum* — that blessed springtime when, according to tradition, the forbears first set foot on the cherished tribal soil.[1]

The Celtic septs parted company with their classical kin in the verdant Danube vales, and became formidable rivals in the ensuing strife for supreme power. In the same century as the Greeks invaded India, the Eternal City was sacked by a Gallic host. The champions of the Gaelic branch, after many adventures by land and sea, reached Ireland. Dense forests of oak alternated with emerald meads intersected by many a silver stream. The

[1] The VER SACRUM is discussed at length by R. v. IHERING in his EVOLUTION OF THE ARYAN (Swan Sonnenschein, London, 1897). The book is a brilliant contribution to the elucidation of Indo-European origins.

*Dru*ids had charge of the forest *tree*s which the Greek deva-worshippers personified as *dry*ads just as they transformed the fruitful earth to De*meter* or *Mother* Earth. The poetry of Nature appealed no less to the fancy of the Celts who looked on woods and lakes as instinct with life and feeling. Giant-oaks were felled, yet not wantonly, but in order that the Druids who were masters of their craft might join the mighty trunks to pontoon-bridges. If the dwellers on the other shore did not let the Gaels pass, exciting frays took place on the holms or in the shallows. The Druids were skilled leeches as well as expert builders. They worshipped Brigit, the patroness of learning, who revealed to her votaries the lore of healing herbs and starry skies. Originally, the cult of the goddess was symbolic of Nature's awakening from her long winter sleep. When the young blossoms burst into fairy bloom, and the hedges ring with music, and the glad heart of man breaks out in holier song, the Irish peasantry offered the first *ovi*ne *milk* for a thanksoffering. *Oimelc* or St Brigit's Day was the Spring Festival of Erin.

The Pontiffs who appointed the hours for halting and wandering, rose to the dignity of

astronomer-priests in Italy, where they fixed March as the first *month*, *i.e.*, revolution of the *moon*, October as the eighth, and so on. In the early history of Rome, January and February were consecrated to solar deities, but the rest of the year to various aspects of the moon. The following is an extract from a letter written by an American friend, with whom the author frequently conversed on solar and lunar legends:

"In the ancient myths which appear to be based on close observation of Nature, the royal dynasties which derive their origin from the sun are represented as kindly and benevolent, but lunar kings as selfish and cold. Sunshine, indeed, is genial and healthy, and promotes Nature's growth. No food is more vitalising than sun-dried fruit, and sunbaths are most invigorating, the golden rays acting as electric currents. But the moon exhausts, and draws all magnetism away from earth. Exposure of the body to moonlight for any length of time lowers the vitality. Again, looking into the sun strengthens the eyesight, many Orientals make a regular practice of it during morning and evening hours, while moongazers are subject to somnambulism and lunacy. Let poets praise the magic beams of

the 'sweet regent in the star-lit skies,' but Nature hymns the sun! The whole earth proclaims his glory, feels attracted by his pure light, and eternally moves round the heavenly fire."

It is quite possible that similar reflections were interwoven with the venerable cult of the Persian fire-worshippers, and with the brilliant Greek mythology. The ideas to which our correspondent has given such eloquent expression may also lie at the root of the genealogies in the epical poetry of India. At any rate, the Kurus who were always fighting or gambling are counted as a lunar race, whereas Janaka and Râma, selfless and unattached to earthly pleasures and possessions, were solar kings.

> "Vâlmîki sings
> The ancient glories of the sun-born kings,"

says Kâlidâsa.[1]

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[1] Another illustrious house that claimed solar descent was the family of Buddha. Koshala was the native land of Râma as well as Gotama Buddha.

XVI

MORE POETRY

One of the most touching episodes in the Mahâ-Bhârata is the story of Nala and Damayanti. Its stanzas flow as gracefully as the polished hexameters of Virgil's eclogues, but the author of the Sanskrit pastoral was happier in the choice and treatment of his subject than the great Latin poet. An evil spell had been cast on King Nala, and in a dark hour he staked and lost his kingdom. The royal gambler's sufferings and redemption were narrated in the jungle, as a solace in affliction, to King Yudhishthir, whom a similar fate had befallen.[1]

Reduced to utter poverty, Nala and his

[1] From the earliest times, playing at dice seems to have been a favourite pastime and, in its worse aspects, a national vice of the Hindus. The Vedic Hymnal contains a touching elegy known as Gambler's Lament. Many a passionate gamester ruined himself and his family in the sabha or club-house. Manu denounces betting and gambling as "open theft" which ought to be suppressed by law.

devoted consort roamed through the forest, and by some further mishap were separated from each other. Queen Damayanti fell in with a caravan of traders whose camels were laden with bales of merchandise, huge bags of rice and musk, and fragrant sandalwood. The men took compassion on the lady's forlorn state, and invited her to travel with with them to the nearest market town.[1]

"A caravan of merchants, elephants, and steeds, and cars,
And beyond, a pleasant river with its waters cool and clear,
Quiet was the stream and waveless, girt about with spreading canes,
There the cuckoo and the osprey, and the red-geese clamouring stood,
Swarmed the turtle, fish, and serpents, there rose many a stately isle."

They moved on in the direction of the silver-glinting current—

"Flowers and trees bedecked its borders, where the birds melodious sang."

While the party rested near the delicious waters, a herd of wild tuskers suddenly

[1] The few lines quoted from Nala and Damayanti are translated by Dean Milman, and the other poetry by Ralph Griffith.

attacked them. Damayanti fainted, and when she recovered from her swoon, all danger was past, but alas! the caravan, too, had departed. The poor woman dragged herself along, with bleeding feet and dishevelled hair, and more than once lost her way in the dense jungle, which seemed to have no end. Her mind was distracted and her body weary, and she would have welcomed death as a great relief. A feeling of drowsiness came over her at last, and as she awoke from her stupor and walked on, O joy! she heard a chattering brook, and the forest began to open. Damayanti beheld green fields in the mellow light of the western sun and, right across the horizon, the curling smoke of a fair city that gently rose upon the velvet hills. The terrace gardens of Chedi, with stately lawns and spreading trees, lay between the town and the woods, and the Queen-Mother was taking a drive in the shaded avenues, when her observant eye caught sight of Damayanti in the distance. The ragged appearance and noble bearing of the dark-eyed stranger arrested her attention; she sent for her, and being pleased with Damayanti's speech and person, allowed her to stay in the palace.

The King of Berar had hitherto found no clue as to the whereabouts of his daughter Damayanti, until one of the royal emissaries detected her in the palace of her cousin, the Râja of Chedi. The Dowager-Queen, on being informed of Damayanti's name and station, greeted her favourite sister's child with many tears and kisses, and sent her noble kinswoman back to the King her father, with a becoming escort, and rich presents, and many prayers to return soon.

Meanwhile, the adverse influence had left Nala, and being entirely without means of subsistence, he was glad to be taken as a charioteer into the service of the Hereditary Prince of Oudh. Nala was very unhappy, for he felt impressed that his faithful lady could not have survived the dangers and hardships of forest life, and her imagined death lay heavy on his conscience. Damayanti, no less anxious to be restored to her dear lord of whom she had heard nothing all the time, had a fictitious report spread that she was going to hold a swayamvara. She cherished some faint hope that the rumour might reach her Nala and bring him back to her.

Among the suitors who came to the Court of Berar, was the youthful Prince of Oudh;

but how great was his surprise when he saw no festive preparations! Damayanti sat at the open casement and, with expectant eyes, watched the arrival of her father's guests. No sooner did she espy the Prince's charioteer than the loving wife rushed into Nala's arms, and there was great rejoicing.[1]

As bright a jewel of her sex as Damayanti was Sâvitri, another heroine of the Mahâ-Bhârata. "Sâvitri freed her husband's soul by the simple courage of a woman's heart, and the sweetness of a woman's tongue." Conjugal fidelity takes a prominent place amongst Hindu virtues, and gems many a page of Sanskrit literature. Sîta, the queen of all wives, is reverenced in every zenana. The death and rebirth of Sati is a theme of which Indian poets never tire. Her undying love of Shiva lived on beyond the grave and became the seed of a new life implanted in Uma, the lovely highland maid. Uma's unflinching devotion to the weird god suggested to Kâlidâsa one of his sweetest

[1] "Nala and Damayanti" is evidently a free copy, in miniature, of the earlier portions of the Mahâ-Bhârata. The idyllic poem was so popular among the Hindus, that the learned vyâsas included it in the great national epic which was a kind of ENCYCLOPEDIA INDICA in those ancient times.

songs. Even as a child, Uma could dimly recollect her pre-natal love and self-sacrifice.

> "As swans in bands
> Fly back to Ganga's well-remembered sands,
> So dawned upon the maiden's waking mind
> The far-off mem'ry of her life resigned."

Shiva is besmeared with ashes like a yogi, and his favourite haunts are burial grounds; but Uma has no fear, and lovingly waits on him, gathering wild roots and herbs for his food, and bringing fresh water and flowers every day. When her affection remains unrequited, the mortified maiden retires to a wilderness, being determined to lead an ascetic life, and thus render herself more acceptable in Shiva's sight. Her unshaken faith touches the god at last, and he appears before the fair penitent in an altered shape, so that she may not recognise him. To test her sincerity, he speaks slightingly of Shiva, but Uma is indignant at the stranger's irreverence.

> "Her quivering lip, her darkly-flashing eye
> Told that the tempest of her wrath was nigh,"

and she says disdainfully—

> "'Tis ever thus, the mighty and the just
> Are scorned by souls that grovel in the dust."

Shiva is satisfied and reveals himself to the startled maiden—

> "And Uma trembled like a river's course
> Checked for a moment in its onward force
> By some huge rock amid the torrents hurled,"

but tender words fall on her ears and calm her troubled breast.

> "The silver moon on Shiva's forehead shone,
> While softly spake the god in gracious tone—
> O gentle maiden, wise and true of soul,
> Lo! now I bend beneath thy sweet control."

The marriage ceremony is solemnised, and the priest as he stands before the sacred fire pronounces a blessing over the young couple:

> "This flame be witness of your wedded life—
> Be just, thou husband, and be true, thou wife!"

The divine bridegroom then turns to his beloved—

> "Look, gentle Uma, cried her lord, afar
> Seest thou the brightness of yon polar star?
> Like that unchanging ray thy faith must shine!
> Sobbing she whispered: Yes, for ever thine!"

RÂMA'S RACE is another poem by Kâlidâsa. Kusha, one of Râma's sons, removed the royal

residence, and the poet graphically describes the forsaken city of Ayodhya—

"Once there was music in the splashing wave
Of lakes where maidens loved their limbs to lave;
But now the waters echo with the blows
Struck with the horns of savage buffaloes.

"Once the tame peacock showed his glittering crest
'Mid waving branches where he loved to rest,
Once in the garden lovely girls at play
Culled the bright flowers and gently touched the spray;
But now wild monkeys in their savage joy
Tread down the blossoms, and the plants destroy."

The poem is Vedântic in its tone, but philosophic reflection is happily mingled with descriptive verse, in the fashion of Wordsworth. Two other lyrical pieces by Kâlidâsa are extant. The CLOUD-MESSENGER, "a reverie full of love's richest music," has nearly as often been translated as the Odes of Horace, but THE SEASONS are not so well known to English readers. Here is a specimen of the simple rhyme:

"Now the burning summer sun
Hath unchallenged empire won,
And the scorching winds blow free,
Blighting every herb and tree.

"Lo! the lion, forest king,
Through the wood is wandering,
By the maddening thirst oppressed,
Ceaseless heaves his panting chest.

"From their mountain caverns see
Buffaloes rush furiously,
With hanging tongue and foam-flecked hide,
Tossing high their nostrils wide."

The blue-necked peacocks scorched by the heat are too languid to display their jewelled trains, and the frogs, in their agony, leave the shrunken pool, unheeded by the venomous cobra—

"Who lifts up his head on high
If some breeze may wander by."

At last, soft showers of rain revive the parched earth, and the refreshed atmosphere is laden with fragrance. Pearly sprays of jasmine and the ruby blossoms of the ashoka plant vie in beauty with the golden gorse.

"Lakes are sweet with opening flowers,
Gardens gay with jasmine bowers,
And the woods to charm the sight
Show their bloom of purest white."[1]

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[1] The Seasons were the first Sanskrit text which ever appeared in print. Sir William Jones, the pioneer of Oriental culture in Europe, had the poem published anno 1792.

Krishna's amours have found a poetical interpreter in Jayadeva, who lived in Bengal in the twelfth century A.D. His GÎTA GOVINDA or Shepherd's Song has been set to choral music, and bears resemblance to some of our oratorios. Krishna amuses himself with the shepherdesses, but Râdha, his first love, weeps bitterly at being forsaken by the fickle youth. Comes a milkmaid and sings—

"In this love tide of spring when the amorous breeze
Has kissed itself sweet on the beautiful trees,
And the humming of numberless bees, as they throng
To the blossoming shrubs, swells the kokila's song,

"In this love tide of spring when the spirit is glad,
And the parted (yes, only the parted) are sad,
Thy lover, thy Krishna, is dancing in glee
With troops of young maidens, forgetful of thee!"

Nanda, good-natured and plain-spoken, comforts Râdha and bids her seek his foster-child and make up the love quarrel.

"Go, gentle Râdha, seek thy love,
Dark are the woodlands, black the sky above;
Bring thy dear wanderer home and let him rest
His weary head upon thy faithful breast."

The damsel with the milk pail sings in response—

> "Saffron robes his body grace,
> Flowery wreaths his limbs entwine,
> There's a smile upon his face,
> And his ears with jewels shine.
> In that youthful company
> Amorous felon ! revels he
> False to all, most false to thee !"

Râdha is bewildered and makes anxious search for Krishna in the dusky copses and tangled bushes of Vrindâvana Forest. But she is too agitated to enjoy the beauty of the woods and the picturesque streams,

> "Which are white with silver wings
> Of the swans that autumn brings."

The annual rain is over, and it is the time of the year when the busy wife expects the goodman home, and makes a clean fireside, and spreads the table with good things. Râdha finds Krishna frolicking and dancing with the gopis; she feels miserable and sinks down exhausted with fatigue. A shepherdess gently touches and consoles her. In a recitative, she dwells on the sorrows of Krishna, who yearns for Râdha's forgiveness. And that is quite true, Râdha's image is still

lingering in Krishna's breast, and presently he parts with the bright-eyed gopis and ruefully seeks his dear Râdha in the shaded groves. But she fancies herself deserted, and grudges her imaginary rival the caresses of Krishna. Her painful reverie is interrupted by the approach of the repentant lover, who murmurs gentle words and meekly craves her pardon, but Râdha, stung with jealousy, bids him go and leave her. Krishna hums in an undertone—

"Even in wrath thy eyes, love,
Will shine away my fear!"

and when Râdha scornfully turns away, he goes on singing—

"She is fled, she is gone! O how angry was she
When she saw the gay shepherd-girls dancing with me.
O Krishna, vile Krishna, lament thee and mourn,
Thy lady has left thee, has left thee in scorn.

"How bright in her anger she seems to me now,
With her scorn-flashing glance, and her passion-
arched brow.
And her proud trembling eye in my fancy I see,
Like a lotus that throbs 'neath the wing of a bee.
O Krishna, vile Krishna, lament thee and mourn,
Thy lady has left thee, has left thee in scorn."

Râdha blames herself for having been too

harsh, but her remorse comes too late, Krishna is gone. She longs for his presence, and is restless; she is in love like the sweet birds around her that twitter love songs to their mates. Evening comes, and Râdha cannot keep quiet any longer. She feels like a lost sheep, aye, like a shepherd who has lost a sheep; she must go and find her Krishna. "Even the reeds are bending low with pointed fingers to show her the way." The lovers meet and are re-united.

The Gîta Govinda, like Solomon's Song, is an allegorical poem. Krishna stands for the soul which, again and again, is attracted by the objects of the senses, the gopis, until Divine Love (Râdha) reclaims the dear wanderer. His heart is bruised and weary, and he longs for rest.

> "Return,
> Sweet messenger of rest,
> I hate the sins that made thee mourn,
> And drove thee from my breast."

Jayadeva has been severely criticised for painting Divine Pity in the gross colours of earthly affection, but, for all that, the Shepherd's Song is a magnificent work of art. The poet himself was as conscious of the magic

of his brush as he was free from that false modesty which is so often courted by ephemeral genius, but despised by every true artist. In melodious Sanskrit verse, he thus addresses his readers (in Arnold's version)—

> "Mark this song of Jayadev!
> Deep as pearl in ocean's wave,
> Lurketh in its lines a wonder,
> Which the wise alone will ponder."

XVII

HISTORY AND FICTION

WHEN the old King of Kanouj died, the Crown Prince was abroad fighting the Huns. He came home at once, and his grief was doubled and trebled when he learned that his sister was a prisoner with the King of Malva, who had defeated and slain her husband, the Râja of an adjacent state. The young ruler of Kanouj appointed his brother Harsha as deputy-regent, and then marched to the Queen's rescue, at the head of a large army, his cousin Bhandi being one of the

generals. When Harsha received the news that the King, his brother, had been assassinated by a treacherous ally, the fresh calamity almost broke his affectionate heart. All this happened soon after A.D. 600. Prince Bhandi returned victorious from the Malva campaign, with the intelligence that Harsha's widowed sister had escaped from captivity, and was believed to be concealed in the Vindhya Mountains. King Harsha left Bhandi in charge of the army, and, attended by a small suite, set out in search of her. By the help of a Buddhist recluse he succeeded in finding his sister, but alas! she was engaged in the melancholy task of preparing her own funeral pyre. King Harsha, however, dissuaded her from the cruel act of suttee, and took her back to Kanouj, where both changed their religion and became devout Buddhists.

These are the chief incidents which Bâna relates in his memoirs of King Harsha's reign. The HARSHA CHARITA has literary merit as well as historical value, a rare combination in Indian books. Sanskrit literature abounds in poets and philosophers, but is sadly deficient in historians. The Purânic genealogies and the KASHMIR CHRONICLE will hardly be called history by

readers of Gibbon and Ranke. The Hindu mind, at all times, paid such keen attention to eternal life that it neglected to record mere temporary events. Even the Harsha Charita is not based on state documents or debates of the Kanouj Senate, but on personal observation of contemporary history. The author was a man of the world, shrewd and polished; he had spent many years in foreign travel, and felt quite at home both in the camp and court of King Harsha, whose chronicler he was to become. Bâna had a quick eye for all that is good and noble in man, and kept in close touch with the people and their true interests. His genial nature and practical bent, his comprehensive knowledge and wide sympathies, made him everybody's favourite and friend. The royal favour which he enjoyed so long, and the breadth of his genius gave him ample opportunity to become familiar with all phases of life. That is the secret charm which makes his books so readable; one feels that the writer has not acquired his culture by laborious study, but pours out the fulness of a rich and chequered experience. Bâna has written the best Sanskrit novel, and the Pearl Necklace, which is also ascribed

to his pen, takes a high rank in the dramatic literature of the Hindus.[1]

Dandin is another novelist who lived in King Harsha's reign, and depicted Kanouj life in the seventh century. He has cleverly mixed the colours of the Arabian Nights and the Italian Decamerone without, however, attaining the perfection of either. The romancers of India revel in the marvellous and supernatural, and are as inventive and versatile as the ingenious author of Gil Blas. Subandhu's love stories are also considered standard works of Sanskrit fiction.

[1] The novel is full of weird romance, and written in a powerful, but overloaded, style. Life after life, the same pair of lovers meet, being attracted by an irresistible passion, but time after time a cruel fate tears them from each other. At last all obstacles are overcome, Karma has spent its force and can react no longer; doubt ends in joy, and gloom in the bliss of union.

XVIII

FABLES AND PROVERBS

By far the most popular account of life in Ancient India is to be found in the Jâtakas or Birth Stories of the Buddha. They are biographies of Gotama's various incarnations, brimful with fun, practical wisdom, and incidents taken from the life of the people. If we want to know something of Mesopotamian civilisation, about A.D. 800 when Harun-al-Rashid was Commander of the Faithful, the Arabian Nights inform us ever so much better about the doings of the multitudes that were buzzing in the streets and swarming in the warehouses of Bagdad than learned volumes of Oriental history. Similarly, the Jâtaka stories are like vivid flashes throwing light on the old Indian panorama of bazaar and caravan, farmyard and barracks, the busy workshop and quiet cloister. The Jâtakas are the oldest fairy tales of the Aryan race, but not so generally known in Europe as another collection called Pancha-Tantra or the Five Books of

Fables.[1] Many a practical joke and good yarn over which Æsop has made us chuckle recurs in the Pancha-Tantra. The Greek fabulist is supposed to have lived in Asia as a guest of Crœsus the millionaire, and was possibly fishing in the same river of folklore from which the Pancha-Tantra is derived. Indian fables are known to have passed into Persian channels at an early time, and King Crœsus kept up intimate relations with Persia, both of a hostile and amicable nature. The Pancha-Tantra is composed in easy Sanskrit, but the Jâtaka Tales in one of the Hindu dialects. Books written in a dialect are slow to travel beyond the pale of the province where it is spoken, but a classical tongue like Sanskrit spreads quickly over a wide geographical

[1] In the Epic Age, the *Panch*âlas or "Five" Boroughs were settled south-east of the Kurus; both tribes had trekked eastward from the *Panch*ab or Punjab, *i.e.*, Five-River-Land. *Punch* is an Indian beverage consisting of "five" ingredients. The first five books of the Bible are called *Penta*teuch in Greek, and *Pancha*-Tantra, in Sanskrit, also signifies "Five Books." *Tan*tra means *ten*dency or drift of an argument; the outlines of a subject; a book; the Book or Bible of the Tantrists.

*Jâ*taka (natal) belongs to the same cluster of words as *jan*aka (father) and *jan*ma (birth.)

area. This explains why the Jâtakas have found but few and only modern translators, while the Pancha-Tantra, although it is of a younger date, has been rendered, in numerous versions, into the chief languages of Asia and Europe during the last thousand years. Here is a sample of its style.

A donkey was employed in pulling a washerman's cart, and after the day's labour, at nightfall, he liked to have a good feed off the neighbour's cucumber field. A jackal once joined him, and when the two had feasted on the cool and delicious fruit, the donkey exclaimed: "Isn't it a glorious night, old fellow? I feel so jolly, I must sing a song." The wise jackal drily observed that trespassers had better keep quiet, but the silly ass brayed merrily, until the gardener woke up and gave him a sound thrashing.

Another tale is about a banker who had lost heavily in speculation. A Buddhist monk appeared to him in his sleep, and said: "Don't be distressed, my friend. In your previous life you have done me a good turn, so I am going to help you out of your difficulty. To-morrow morning you shall see me again; then strike me on my head, and you will have plenty of money." The

dream was verified; the merchant did as he was bidden, and the monk's body immediately changed into pure gold. The family hairdresser happened to be present at these strange proceedings, and felt tempted to repeat the profitable experiment. So he hurried off to the nearest monastery, and asked a plump and sleek-faced Buddhist if he would mind coming home with him, and tell him the value of some old manuscript, scratched in the Deva script on birchen bark, which he said had come into his possession. The good-natured priest, who was of a bookish turn, readily consented. When they had entered the house, the villain bolted the door, and gave the unsuspecting monk a tremendous thump on his bald pate. The piteous cries of the victim aroused the neighbours; the barber was arrested, and duly punished.

The floating wisdom of India is embedded in the HITOPADESHA or Book of Good Counsel. Current proverbs and moral lessons are presented in graceful verse, and form an excellent class-book, which is used all over India to teach Hindu boys the elegancies of Sanskrit composition, just as Æsop's Fables are parsed and studied in our

grammar schools. We have picked a dozen sayings from the Hitopadesha, the first and second being Englished by Sir Monier-Williams, and the rest by Sir Edwin Arnold.

(1) "Friendship's true touchstone is adversity."

(2) "A piece of glass may like a jewel glow
If but a lump of gold be placed below;
So even fools to eminence may rise
By close association with the wise."

(3) "Sickness, anguish, bonds, and woe
Spring from wrongs wrought long ago."

(4) "In good fortune not elated, in misfortune not dismayed,
Ever eloquent in counsel, never in the field afraid,
Proudly emulous of honour, steadfastly on wisdom set:
These six virtues in the nature of a noble soul are met."

(5) "Small things wax exceeding mighty, being cunningly combined,
Furious elephants are fastened with a rope of grass-blades twined."

(6) "Pity them that crave thy pity! who art thou to stint thy hoard,
When the holy moon shines equal on the leper and the lord?"

(7) "Sentences of studied wisdom nought avail if unapplied;
Though the blind man hold a lantern, yet his footsteps stray aside."

(8) "True religion, 'tis not blindly prating what thy teachers prate,
But to love as God is loving, all things be they small or great;
And true bliss is when a sane mind does a healthy body fill,
And true knowledge is the knowing what is good and what is ill."

(9) "Be not haughty being wealthy, droop not having lost thy all;
Fate does play with mortal fortune as a girl does toss her ball."

(10) "Homely features lack not favour when true wisdom they reveal,
And a wife is fair and honoured while her heart is firm and leal."

(11) "Fellow be with kindly foemen rather than with friends unkind;
Friend and foeman are distinguished not by title but by mind."

(12) "Brahmins for their lore have honour, Kshatriyas for bravery,
Vaishyas for their hard-earned treasure, Shûdras for humility." [1]

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[1] The first English version of the Hitopadesha was prepared by Ch. Wilkins in 1787. The same scholar rendered the Bhagavad Gita into English, at a time when no other European translation of any Sanskrit work existed.

XIX

LANGUAGES AND NATIONS

READER, have you ever gone for your holiday on a cycling tour across England, from London to Windermere, or from Yorkshire to Devon? If so, your ear must have been struck by the variety of dialect as forcibly as your eye by the change of scenery. People do not talk alike on an Essex farm and in a Lancashire mill, nor has a Cornish miner the same turn of the tongue as a bargeman on the River Tyne. The singsong of Leipzig sounds quite foreign in the streets of Hanover, and the Provence *patois* may be taken, even by a Parisian, for Italian rather than French. There is plenty of provincialism in every country, and when a fervent patriot like Dante or Luther is born, we can quite understand that his native dialect, in which he delivers the stirring message, should be stamped with the impress of his genius,

and obtain national currency.[1] Sanskrit was originally one out of many dialects spoken by a set of farmers who had settled in the Punjab. But when great poets arose in their midst, and composed the Veda in Sanskrit, the Vedic hymns took every heart by storm, and the sacred tongue spread like wildfire among the sister-tribes, from the Afghan frontier to the banks of the Ganges and Jumna, until the brogue of the cowshed and stackyard was recognised as the literary language of Hindustan. Kindred dialects, by the side of Sanskrit, had taken root in India, but, owing to the spread and influence of Brahminic culture, were so much overgrown with Vedic words that they came to be looked upon as derived from Sanskrit. The same has happened in Europe. When the Roman legions crossed the Alps, and were stationed in Gaul, the vulgar idioms of the Italian soldiers developed into French which, in reality, is an abundant crop of Roman slang and provincial Latin raised on Celtic soil. The new vocabulary diverged locally exactly as in India, especially since

[1] The dialect of Luther-land (Saxony) has become the basis of modern German, and Florence, the birthplace of Dante, is the seminary of classical Italian.

the Franks occupied France. In the ensuing struggle for literary supremacy, the *patois* of Paris came out victorious from the clash of tongues which were parisianised more or less, just as in the East they were sanskritised. Nor does our comparison end here. Latin was ultimately transplanted from the Roman forum to the Christian church, and Sanskrit likewise became an ecclesiastical language little understood by the people. Buddha did not preach to them in Sanskrit, but in the popular and widely-diffused dialect of Koshala, where he was bred and born. After the reformer's death, Koshala was conquered and annexed by Magadha. History records that the Emperor Charlemagne, at public functions, spoke Latin, but the famous declaration by his grandsons, dated A.D. 842, was made in French. Similarly, the Sanskrit of the Veda was still in official use at the Court of the Emperor Chandragupta, but the celebrated edicts of his grandson Ashoka were issued in Mâgadhi as Koshali was styled in deference to the new ruling power.[1] The two

[1] The letter *i* being added to the name of an Indian province signifies its dialect. Thus, Bengali is spoken in Bengal, and Gujarati in Gujarat. Koshali was current in Koshala, the ancient land of Oudh, and Mâgadhi, a

documents referred to are the earliest relics of French and Mâgadhi. Poets and orators, like Corneille and Bossuet, have shaped French into literary form; Buddha's sermons and Ashoka's proclamations have done the same for Mâgadhi. As a vehicle of Buddhist thought, Mâgadhi came to be called Pâli, the pale and pillar of the Reformation, whilst Sanskrit was the stay and support of orthodox Brahminism. The people of Ceylon and Burma—two most active centres of Buddhism at the present day—prefer to use the old name Mâgadhi instead of Pâli.[1]

The relation of Pâli to Sanskrit closely resembles that of the Romance tongues to

sister-*patois*, in Magadha or Behar. Koshali itself was called Mâgadhi when it became the government language of Imperial Magadha. Professor Rhys Davids, in a private communication to the author, points out that the official tongue of Magadha differed from local Mâgadhi in many little ways because it was based on the dialect of Koshala, the previous great power. Koshali had been the royal speech of Râma and his race.

[1] The literary form of Koshali was known as Pâli, *i.e.*, canonical, because the pâli or canon of the Buddhists was composed in the ancient dialect of Oudh. The use of the term Mâgadhi for Pâli dates from the time when the Guptas rose in Kanouj, and Magadha declined.

Latin. Spanish and Italian often change two Latin consonants to a double. Se*pt*em and oc*t*o (seven and eight) have become se*tt*e and o*tt*o in Italian. The Latin *pl*anos, meaning "plains" covered with long grass, have been transferred from the Roman campagna to the prairies of Argentine, and are called *ll*anos in Spanish, which, like French, is based on corrupt Latin. Under the same phonetic law, Pâli changed the Sanskrit word dha*rm*a to dha*mm*a, *i.e.*, the good "law" of Buddha, sû*tr*a to su*tt*a, and so on.[1] The Buddhist suttas, however, are no longer brief texts like the Sanskrit sûtras, but short sermons and homilies on such texts; the Sermon on the Mount may be called a Christian sutta. The Vedic lore which had been preserved in memory until the hallowed traditions were fixed in the shape of sûtras was looked upon

[1]

English	Latin	Italian	Sanskrit	Pâli
seven	se*pt*em	se*tt*e	sa*pt*a	sa*tt*a
eight	oc*t*o	o*tt*o	as*ht*a	a*tth*a

Assimilation of consonants is quite as common in provincial English as it is in Pâli or Italian. Gi*rl*s and ho*rs*es, on many a vulgar lip, are changed to ge*ll*s and ho*ss*es, Lo*nd*on to Lu*nn*on, and a favourite phrase with the rustics of Warwickshire is: it do*nn*a si*nn*ify, *i.e.*, it doe*sn*a si*gn*ify, it does not matter.

by Kshatriyas and Brahmins, in the very best society, as good *form* or *dharma*.[1] The psychology of Buddhism is Abhidhamma, literally, founded on precedent, "on the dhamma." The DHAMMAPADA or "Pathway of the Good Law" is a beautiful selection of Indian ethics, while the ABHIDHAMMA, amongst other subject-matter, deals with the inner workings of the mind.[2]

Again, *au*rum, the Latin word for gold, has been shortened to *o*r in French, and G*au*tama (as common a name in India as Jack or John in England) to G*o*tama in

[1] From the verb dhar, *i.e.*, to "conform" to established custom. Dissent from established forms is adharma or nonconformity. The word "form" is of Latin origin. The old Romans could not well pronounce the *dh*, so they changed the dental aspirate to an *f*, just as our little ones will say no*f*ing rather than no*th*ing.

[2] The Sutta doctrines (dhamma) which are worked out more fully in the Abhidhamma or Further Dhamma must not be confounded with the Dharma Sûtras or Brahminic law compendiums. The psychology of the Brahmins is called sânkhya or synthetic, enumerating a diversity of co-existing principles, whereas Vedânta affirms the unity of law and life. The relationship between Sânkhya and Vedânta will be discussed in the next volume.

Mâgadhi. Buddha's family name was Gotama, because he was a Magadha man.[1]

Many Sanskrit patronymics are formed by modifying the first vowel in the word from which they are derived. The Bh*â*ratas and K*au*ravas of epic fame have sprung from Bh*a*rata and K*u*ru. King Dr*u*pada's daughter was Princess Dr*au*padi, and the most illustrious of G*o*tama's lineage was G*au*tama Buddha. But Mâgadhi changed *au* to *o*, and brought confusion into the names.[2]

The Gautamas belonged to the oldest aristocracy of Hindustan, and claimed descent from Gotama Rishi, a priest and warrior in the Vedic Age. Singh, or the Lion-hearted,

[1] Magadha, again, in an imperial sense, that is to say, including Koshala or Oudh. Pronounce aur-um like "our," and Gaut-ama like "gout."

[2] Subjoined are a few more examples of derivatives formed on the same principle. The followers of B*u*ddha are known in India as B*au*ddhas (Buddhists); the worshippers of Sh*i*va and V*i*shnu as Sh*ai*vas and V*ai*shnavas; and believers in Bh*a*gavat Krishna as Bh*â*gavatas (Krishnaists). M*â*gadhi is the old dialect of M*a*gadha, and v*â*naprasthas are the sages of antiquity who, in a spirit of self-sacrifice, went *for*th (*pra*) from their native villages, henceforth to *stay* (*stha*) in the solitude of the "forest" (v*a*na).

W*a*les and W*e*lshman, Chr*i*st and Chr*i*stian, n*a*tion and n*a*tionalist, show a similar transition of sound.

was a favourite surname of the lordly Gautamas and cognate clans, as it is still of the martial Sikhs and Rajputs. From the Punjab, the Lionhearts proceeded east and south on their conquering and civilising mission. Territorial expansion went hand in hand with ecclesiastical activity and commercial enterprise. Oudh, Magadha, and Ujain developed into busy inland marts and seminaries of Pâli learning. The tiger-heroes, who fought at Kurukshetra, crossed the River Krishna, and colonised Kurumandala or the Coromandel coast.[1] Even distant Malay and the adjoining isles came under Aryan influence. The kavis or poet-priests brahminised the heathen lands which the Kshatriyas had conquered. In Java, they composed a thoroughly national epic, after the pattern of the Mahâ-Bhârata, in Kavi, which was a Kuru dialect mixed with Malay. The Vaishyas worked the foreign tin mines from Bangkok to Bangka, east of Sumatra, and shipped large cargoes, chiefly from

[1] The Vedic hymnal consists of ten mandalas or cycles of song, each sacred round containing, on an average, a hundred hymns. In a political sense, mandalas are arrondissements or shires. Coromandel = Kurushire.

*Sing*apore, the chief emporium of the Singhs.[1] The tin trade must have been considerable, since Bengal derives its name from the imported banga (tin). One of the corner stones of the old Indian Empire was the Bombay littoral with its direct water-ways to Babylon and Egypt. The gallant Singhs established military stations and mercantile depots in the Mahratta country, and reached Singhala (Ceylon) long before the Christian era.

As English merchants transact business with the natives of Hongkong and Shanghai in a mixed jargon called *Pidjin*, *i.e.*, *Busin*ess English, so Magadha and Ujain firms closed all deals in their Ceylonese warehouses in Pidjin Mâgadhi, or some other Singh *patois* which both buyers and sellers

[1] Metro*polis* = mother-town. Greek *pol* or Sanskrit *pur* signifies "town." Like a typical Aryan, the monosyllable has travelled extensively. It can be traced from Singa*pore* to Sebasto*pol*, and from Constantino*ple* to Na*ples*, and Greno*ble* in the Alps. Cities of hunters and elephants are implied in the names of Shikar*pur* on the Indus, and Hastina*pur* near Delhi. India, north of the River Krishna, teems with purs or ancient boroughs. Udaipur, Jodhpur, and Jaipur are all in Rajputana. The pur was a subdivision of the mandala.

could understand. Thus originated Singhalese, the language of the Lions' Isle. Ashoka, who had been Governor-General of Ujain before he ascended the throne of Magadha, was an earnest Buddhist, and the Emperor's successor sent missionaries to Ceylon where they preached to the natives in Pâli. To any one knowing Singhalese, Pâli must have been intelligible enough. In the first century, B.C., the Buddhist Canon was committed to writing in the island, and the propagation of the Pâli Scriptures made rapid strides both in Singhala and across the sea in Siam and Burma. The new teaching was deeply religious, but Buddhism has always made ample concessions to mirthfulness and diversion. The sage dialogues of the Buddha and other sacred texts provide food for the soul; the heart takes delight in the dainty gems of the Dhammapada, and the merry Jâtaka Tales, which are also composed in Pâli, appeal to the imagination.

About A.D. 500, when the Magadha Empire declined, its language too was slowly breaking up. Sanskrit had been superseded by Mâgadhi as the national speech of India, and Mâgadhi, in its turn, was displaced by other prâkrits or dialects, just as Latin, after the

downfall of the Roman Empire, had to make room for the Romance tongues, viz. : Italian, Spanish, and French. What really happened was this. The political rise of Magadha had helped Mâgadhi to a corresponding ascendency over the sister-prâkrits, but, when the greatness of Magadha passed away, these came to the front again. Prâkrit means "natural" or native speech unaided by the art of the grammarian, in opposition to Sans*krit*, the *creat*ion of the learned.[1] People, by their own fireside, used to converse in the Prâkrits, although Sanskrit was by no means a dead language in the

[1] According to the theology of the Brahmins, immortal soul is uncreate, but Nature is begotten. Their very word for "Nature" is *prakriti*, *i.e.*, *procreation*; hence prâkrit = natural.

What a man "makes" of himself is called his karma or character. Both *kar*ma and pra*kri*ti are derived from the root *kar* or *kri*, *i.e.*, to make, to *cre*ate. Kar is merely a fuller form than kri, just as our word *star* is but an extension of its Sanskrit equivalent *stri*, *i.e.*, the glitter which is *str*ewn or scattered over the night sky.

In order to generalise the meaning of a word, the Greeks use the prefix *syn*, the Hindus san which is occasionally lengthened to *sans*. *Syn*opsis means a "general" view or summary, and *Sans*krit is, so to speak, the perfect creation or full expression of the Indian mind.

age of Vikrama and Harsha. Villagers and servant-girls, indeed, could not speak it, but city men and courtiers knew it well, and gentlemen's sons learned it in the nursery—almost in their cradle. The dramas of Kâlidâsa and Bâna's novels kept Sanskrit conversation going, on the stage and in the drawing-room. The world of fashion exchanged love letters and issued invitation cards in Sanskrit, and many an official report of the sixth and seventh century was still drawn up in the classical tongue of India. Again we can find a parallel in Europe. After the year 1066, the homely Anglo-Saxon speech was ousted by the courtly dialect of the Norman conquerers. Anglo-Norman was spoken in castle and manor, barristers pleaded through its medium in the law courts, and hon. members attacked each other in Norman in the legislative chamber. Three hundred years after the Battle of Hastings, Saxon burr and Norman click blended in one common music—the English tongue. Even so, by the year 1000, Sanskrit and Prâkrit had been fused into melodious Hindi, the mediæval speech of the Hindus.

At that time, Mahmud was Amir of Ghazni in Afghanistan. He was a brave and true-

hearted man, but a religious fanatic. Sword in one hand, and Koran in the other, his armies invaded the Punjab, and occupied the city of Lahore. Hindu idols were trampled in the dust, temples converted into mosques, Sanskrit and Pâli manuscripts were destroyed, and declared to be works of the devil. But the Moslem conquest of Hindustan was not complete until two hundred years later.

Hindi, far from being crushed, flourished in the vanquished provinces where once Mâgadhi was spoken. At present, it commands a wider linguistic area than any other Hindu vernacular, just as Mâgadhi did in olden times. Languages have their rise and fall like individuals and nations. When Mâgadhi shrunk to a local *patois*, her daughter Pâli had risen to high distinction in the Buddhist Church, and Hindi was yet in the making. Pâli and Hindi are sisters, the former being a priestly tongue without offspring, while the latter has given birth to Hindustani.

In the thirteenth century, when Mohammedan Emperors sat on the throne of Delhi, the Tartars, a second plague of Huns, swept over Asia and Europe. Chenghiz Khan, their indomitable chief, had led them from

the Altai Mountains over the Kirghiz Steppe. Their movements were rapid, but unplanned. They crossed the Volga and Dniepr, sacked Kiev and burned Cracow, defeated the Germans in Silesia and, on their return, overthrew the caliphate of Bagdad. But the Tartars were unable to follow up their victories, and dropped the fruit as soon as they had plucked it.[1]

A kindred tribe were the Mongolians. Since time immemorial they had been wandering like troops of gipsies over the mountain-encircled deserts between China and Siberia, and now immense numbers followed in the track of the Tartars. About A.D. 1400, the Tartars and Mongolians were united in Samarkand into one huge army by Timur, who called himself Chieftain of the Moguls. The wild Mogul host burst like a hurricane over Persia, then pressed eastward, and pitched their tents in the valleys of Hindustan. Timur captured Delhi, which

[1] The Afghan Highlanders and other islamised tribes call their ruling princes Amirs or Emirs, but north and south of Afghanistan, the Amirs are generally styled Khans by their Mohammedan subjects. Amir (commander) and *admir*al (naval commander) are Arabic terms. Khan is a Tartar word, and was originally a title of respect given by the Altaic clansmen to their elders.

was made the capital of the Great Moguls as the Mongolian Emperors of India were styled. The Persian language, at that time the most important in the East, was adopted at the Mogul Court, and Persian literature, just then in its zenith, was eagerly cultivated by the Hindi-speaking Hindus. Firdusi (A.D. 1000), the national bard of Persia, and the wise Saadi (1250), were much admired and often quoted by educated Indians. Sweet Hafiz was yet unborn, but the "red rose of Shiraz" was soon to mingle its intoxicating scent with the rich perfumes which filled the gay flower-garden of Persian poetry. So it is no great matter for surprise that Hindi was more and more persianised. The Moguls had conquered the Hindus, but Hindi gained a victory, greater still, over the rude conquerors. After another generation, the Hindu tongue was firmly established in the camp of Timur's followers. They modernised Hindi according to their needs, and called it urdu, *i.e.*, camp language, but we say Hindustani, because Urdu is still current all over Hindustan.

INDEX

INDEX[1]

SUBJECT

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[1] Including the names of books, families and nations.
[2] Sanskrit *t* is softened before an initial *g*; hence Bhagavat and Bhâgavata, but Bhagavad Gîta.

PROPER NAMES

(Personal and Geographical)

ACCENTED SANSKRIT WORDS.[1]

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[1] One syllable only is intoned in English words (in*te*lligent), whereas, in French and Sanskrit, the accent is evenly distributed (*in*t*e*ll*i*g*e*nt — bh*a*g*a*v*a*t). The mark ^ in the following list of words does not refer to the intonation, but indicates the length of the marked vowels (bhâgavata), after the manner of French accents (protégé).

ETYMOLOGIES

English Dictionary Words

NAMES AND PLACES

SANSKRIT

LATIN

SUNDRIES

(1) *Anglo-Saxon*

(2) *German*

(3) *Greek*

(4) *Irish*

(5) *Norse*

(6) *Old Persian*

(7) *Pâli*

ARYAN ROOTS[1]

Throughout the realm of nature, light, sound, and motion are conjoint forces. Where one is manifest, the others are also present. The Âryas, gifted children of nature as they were, reflected, even in their first attempts of speech, the bright image of their mother. Word never passed the lips of Vedic rishi or Persian mage, Greek rhapsodist or Northern saga-teller, Roman or British orator, which cannot be reduced to a root expressive of the tripartite sense of light (div) or vision (vid), sound or hearing (shru) and movement (vish) or activity (kri). At first, the roots were few, each having threefold force, but as the mind branched out, they multiplied, and retained one sense only, which became a feeder of profoundest thought—the source of Aryan religion and

[1] The Germans call themselves Dutch (*deutsch*), and give to both nations as well as to their English and Scandinavian cousins the common title German (*germanisch*) which, therefore, means the same as Teutonic does in England. The Teutons, together with the Celts whom they have more or less absorbed, form the westernmost branch of the Aryan family of speech. German scholars prefer the name *Indo-German* to *Aryan* which suggests to them Indo-Iranian only. Persian, they say, is a West-Aryan tongue, and the

philosophy. Karma and dharma, character and the sense of duty, really the fruits of "action" and the moral "hold," are evolved from kri and dhar. The germ-idea of dharma is form, literally that which holds (dhar) and binds. Limitation inherent in finite matter is a more scientific phrase, but conveys no more than dharma. The vocable displays a wealth of ethical meaning. "Form" and custom have a firm hold on society; all "law" is binding; "re*lig*ion," too, enjoins many an ob*lig*ation; "environment" and "idiosyncrasy" hold the individual with an iron grip—all this and more is involved in dharma. There is an Indian saying that this life's karma shapes dharma in the next, that is to say, the use which a man makes of his present opportunities determines his future circumstance.

*Brah*ma and Pra*kri*ti—God and Nature—have sprung from the same cluster of roots (brih and kri). It is noteworthy that the supreme god of the Brahmins was originally not conceived as motionless and passive, but as *cre*ative (kri), *i.e.*, active. The definition of Brahma as expansion (brih) of the prayerful heart is a priestly afterthought, far too subtle and scholastic to have a place in primitive culture. The simpler notion of a nature spirit or, as we should say, of cosmic energy "breaking forth" (brih) as star and flower, wood and

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Hindu vernaculars are East-Aryan. Indo-European seems a happier expression than Indo-German, because Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin, the languages of Iran and Erin, Teutonic and Slavonic, were distributed from India to Europe since prehistoric times. The word Aryan recommends itself by its brevity, and, by long-continued usage, is more familiar to Englishmen than Indo-European or Indo-German. We subjoin a table of the various terms with their German equivalents.

England		Germany
Teutonic	=	German
German	=	Dutch
Dutch	=	Hollandish
East-Aryan	=	Aryan
Aryan	=	Indo-German

West-Aryan speech comprises Teutonic and Romance, Erse and Welsh, the Balkan tongues and Russian.

stream, and as the cloud-hid "mountains" (*gebirge* in German) is more in harmony with the naïve sentiments of a vigorous and youthful race. Only the trained linguist or the poet's finer fancy can discern in the clipped coinage of our polished tongues the flash and rush and roar of the wild elements, and the native charm of meadowland and forest, distilled into triple essence.

LIST OF DATES[1]

B.C.

2000-1500—The European Aryans in their oldest historic settlements
11th century—King David of Israel
6th century—Cyrus I.—Croesus—Æsop
522—Buddha enters his ministry
405—†Sophocles
389—Rome sacked by the Gauls
347—†Plato
327—Alexander invades the Punjab
*300—Chandragupta—Megasthenes
3rd century—Ashoka
1st century—Pâli Canon committed to writing
19—†Virgil
8—†Horace

A.D.

4th century—The Huns cross the Volga
5th century—Fall of Rome—Anglo-Saxons settle in England
451—Battle of Chalons
453—†Attila
5th and 6th centuries—Purânas committed to writing—Kâlidâsa—Decline of Magadha and of Indian Buddhism—Rise of the Gupta dynasty and of Hinduism
6th and 7th centuries—Sanskrit still in official use—Many Hindu temples built in Orissa
7th century—Harsha—Bâna—Dandin—Hiouen Thsang visits India
*700—Bhavabhûti
788—Shankara born
*800—Harun-al-Rashid

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[1] Dates marked * are approximate; † refers to the death of a person.

814—†Charlemagne
842—Date of the oldest French document
*1000—Mahmud of Ghazni invades India—Firdusi
11th century—Rajputs rulers of India
1066—Norman Conquest
1096—Crusades commence
1154—Rise of the Plantagenets
*1200—Nibelungen Lied composed
12th century—Jayadeva
13th century—Chenghiz Khan—Moslems rulers of India
1291—†Saadi
1327—†Meister Eckhart
14th century—Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman fused into English—Hafiz
*1400—Timur
15th century—Revival of Greek learning
1546—†Luther
1562—Thirty-nine Articles agreed upon
1576—†Hans Sachs
1616—†Shakespeare
1624—†Jacob Boehme
1674—†Milton
1677—†Spinoza
1681—†Calderon
1684—†Corneille
1704—†Bossuet
1753—†Berkeley
1786—†Frederick the Great
1788—Byron and Schopenhauer born
1792—First Sanskrit text printed
1794—†Gibbon and Sir W. Jones
1804—†Kant
1805—†Schiller
1811—†Bishop Percy
1815—Battle of Waterloo
1821—†Napoleon
1824—†Byron
1832—†Goethe and Scott
1850—†Wordsworth
1860—†Schopenhauer
1863—†Jacob Grimm
1886—†Ranke and Râmakrishna
20th century—Indo-European antiquities firmly established.

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27-1-2021